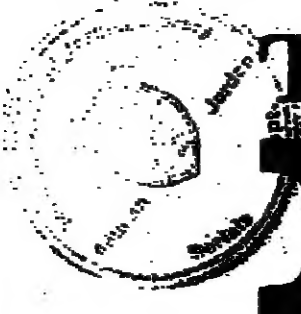


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Peres pushes, but U.S. wants parley on ice

By WOLF BLITZER (Washington) and BENNY MORRIS (Jerusalem)

The political crisis in Israel has effectively brought the U.S.-sponsored drive to promote the Arab-Israeli peace process to a standstill, well-informed U.S. officials acknowledged yesterday.

"We want to let the dust settle [in Israel] before we decide what to do next," one American official said.

For his part, Foreign Minister Peres will try to persuade U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz to "keep the peace process alive."

Peres indicated yesterday that he hopes the Americans will begin to sound out the Soviets on Moscow's attitude to the Israeli conditions for Soviet participation in an international conference. Peres was speaking before leaving for meetings with Shultz in New York and Washington.

Briefing diplomatic correspondents, Peres said that he would insist in Washington on American non-interference in the internal Likud-Labour controversy over the conference.

American officials are now waiting to see the political repercussions of the official reports in Jerusalem on Israel's handling of the Jonathan Jay Pollard spy scandal. U.S. officials are aware of widespread indications that Shamir, Peres, Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Minister-without-Portfolio Moshe Arens may be severely criticized by those reports, which may have political effects on the coalition.

There was widespread disappointment in Washington over the latest turn of events in Jerusalem, especially because Shamir — at least for the time being — had outmaneuvered Peres over the issue of an international conference.

Peres is clearly more popular with administration policymakers than is Shamir. The Americans have made no secret of their appreciation of Peres's intensive efforts in recent weeks to reach a formal understanding with Jordan's King Hussein on the scope of an international conference.

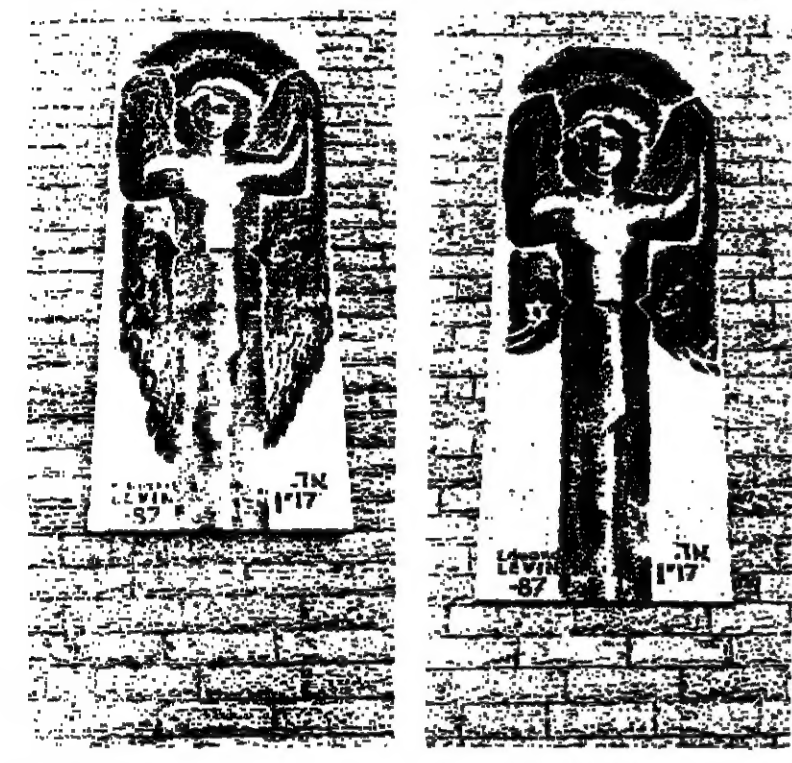
In a spin-off of the Labour-Likud stalemate in Wednesday's inner cabinet meeting, the Foreign Ministry on Wednesday night refused to transmit to Israel's major missions abroad the text of the announcement from the Prime Minister's Office summarizing what had happened that day in the inner cabinet meeting and the gist of Shamir's own "peace plan."

In place of the Prime Minister's Office statement, the Foreign Ministry cabled the missions as follows: "At the end of the discussion today in the inner cabinet there was no vote. As a result, there is for the time being no change in the official position of the Government of Israel regarding the effort to reach direct negotiations with our neighbours after an introductory international conference."

The cable means that the Foreign Ministry, in its diplomatic contacts, will continue to adopt a position in favour of the conference, contrary to the prime minister's and the Likud's stand.

At the briefing before leaving for the U.S., Peres also took to the task the director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, Yossi Ben-Aharon, who is in the U.S., "and who gave *The New York Times* material (i.e. state papers) that he shouldn't have." Peres was referring to material whose publication was detrimental, or was intended to be detrimental, to the convening of the conference.

(Continued on Page 3)



Angel — before and after getting a Star of David. Wings were also clipped. (Brian Hendler)

Jerusalem hoists artist aloft to 'Judaize' angel

By MEIR RONNEN
Post Art Editor

The Jerusalem Municipality yesterday provided a crane to lift immigrant artist Eduard Levin heavenwards to make a critical "correction" to a huge painting of a "welcoming angel," one of three by Levin that the municipality has placed high up on the walls of the Bank Hapoalim-Egged Building at the entrance to the city as part of its Jerusalem Day celebrations.

The trio of angels face the Tel Aviv highway and can be seen from afar by everyone entering the city.

The "correction" followed irate protests from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Orthodox citizens who mistook the central angel for the figure of Jesus. Artist Levin, trained in Russia, has given his three angels the formalized aspect of Byzantine icons. All that Levin did yesterday to give the work a Jewish cast was to add a small Star of David to the central painting, which depicts a long-haired angel with both arms raised and surmounted by a rainbow-like semi-halo.

This is the first time that a figurative painting has been raised in public in Jerusalem in an area passed by most of its Orthodox citizens. If the Star of David fails to satisfy Orthodox circles the angels are likely to be removed.

Like other paintings placed on buildings around the city over the last week or so, the sketchily painted angels look out of place on the handsome stone building, and like the others are of doubtful artistic value.

All the paintings around the centre of the city are to be taken down after Jerusalem Day, May 27.

Other artists participating in the project are Yitzhak Greenfield (Beit Agmon), Noga Adler (Behar Centre), Miriam Neiger (The Pillars, Jaffa Rd.), Eli Schwadron (Jaffa Rd., opposite Clal), David Rakia (Mamilla), Hanna Dorian and David Gerstein (both in Jaffa Rd., near the municipal), and Marek Yannai (General Building). The latter's work depicts past and present political and football personalities on a balcony.

The municipality's Rafi Devara yesterday responded favourably to a suggestion to confine future Jerusalem Day art projects to a public park. Paints and materials were supplied to the artists by the municipality. (See story on page 4).

Vigilantes will be punished — Barak

By JOEL GREENBERG and JOSHUA BRILLIANT
Jerusalem Post Reporters

Deputy Chief of Staff Aluf Ehad Barak yesterday publicly warned settler vigilantes in the territories saying that Jewish rioters in the West Bank would be treated "like common criminals."

"There are Israelis who have overstepped any acceptable norm in their behaviour toward soldiers on duty," Barak told reporters in Tel Aviv. "These people should get a hold on themselves. If they don't, they will be treated like common criminals." Barak said complaints would be filed against Israelis caught in vigilante activity, damaging property or harassing the Arab population.

Barak said the IDF would stop vigilante patrols by settlers, which he said were illegal and interfered with the army's ongoing security activity. IDF searches for vigilantes kept soldiers from carrying out their scheduled duties, and the confrontation with vigilantes could end in bloodshed, he warned.

Barak said the army had recently developed improved, non-lethal riot-control techniques for use, against Palestinian demonstrators in the territories, including longer range rubber bullets, and weaker 22-calibre bullets to be fired by trained snipers. He said more soldiers had been equipped with shields and clubs, for use in mob control.

But he cautioned that in certain situations soldiers may still have to open fire, if their lives were endangered.

The new weapons were introduced after several Arabs were killed or injured by live ammunition. One of the new devices being developed is believed to include a command car with a shovel attached to its front fender to crash through barricades set up by demonstrators.

Barak said the army was investigating the matter. (Continued on Page 3)

Both blocs woo religious parties

By MENACHEM SHALEV
Post Political Reporter

Labour and the Likud drew up their plans yesterday for the battle to win the hearts — and votes — of the religious parties. However, most observers believe that Labour faces an uphill — if not hopeless — struggle to get the few additional Knesset votes it needs for early elections.

Labour's efforts will begin formally at a Sunday meeting in Tel Aviv between a specially appointed three-man committee — comprising Energy Minister Moshe Shaleh and MKs Uzi Baram and Rafi Edri — and a five member delegation of the National Religious Party.

Labour sources said yesterday that if no resolution of the current political deadlock were effected soon, party unity would turn out to have been only "the quiet before the storm." The sources said that many in Labour were critical of the fact that the party leadership had been politically outmaneuvered by the Likud.

They predicted that in the near future the party would be subjected to conflicting pressures from within: from those calling for a unilateral abandonment of the national unity government, like Baram and MK Haim Ramon, and those who will want the party to tone down its focus on the peace process and cease exacerbating inner-government tensions until a Knesset majority for new elections is found.

A Herut secretariat meeting yesterday decided to conduct its contacts with the religious parties in secret, as opposed to Labour's more public approach. MK Haim Kaufman reiterated the Likud's pledge to bring about Knesset approval of religious legislation, notably the "Who is a Jew" amendment or the Rabbinical Courts Law which would empower the rabbinical courts to authorize all conversions.

Kaufman also warned the religious parties against falling prey to Labour's "misrepresentation and deceit," reminding them that Labour leader Peres had imposed party discipline against the "Who is a Jew" amendment.

Labour is at a decided disadvantage in its dealings with religious parties: not only is it inconceivable that the party would support the "Who is a Jew" amendment, but it must also contend with the fact that the majority of the constituents of the religious parties are mainly pro-Likud.

The religious parties, however, would consider a Labour agreement to allow its Knesset members freedom of choice on the "Who is a Jew" draft proposal as a major achievement, since such a development would probably ensure passage of the bill. Most Herut members support the bill in any case.

Defence Minister Rabin yesterday reiterated Labour's decision to remain in the government while seeking new elections, but added that there were still other areas, such as the economy, in which the government could function effectively.

The NRP, which has moved into Labour's focus alongside Shas, is divided between so-called "moderates," such as Religious Affairs Minister Ze'evulun Hammer and Yehuda Ben-Meir, and those who are closely aligned with Herut's political outlook.

The party has officially adopted a position against any minority government. Party sources, however, say that Minister — without Portfolio Yosef Shapira and MK Avner Shalev would ultimately agree to join a Likud-led minority government. But Shaul Yahalom, the party's "diplomatic secretary-general," (Continued on Page 3)

Herzog: Peace on the peace-makers

Jerusalem Post Reporter

President Herzog yesterday called on political leaders in the two major parties to desist from making personal attacks on each other while arguing about the international conference.

Questioned by reporters during a tour of Acre with Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg, Herzog said he would not comment on the international conference issue, as it was a political matter. But he hoped that the discussions would be businesslike and honourable and not degenerate into mud-slinging.

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COPENHAGEN	1	4	10	Cloudy
FRANKFURT	1	3	13	Cloudy
GENEVA	10	10	17	Cloudy
HELSINKI	2	3	7	Cloudy
HONG KONG	26	27	27	Cloudy
JOHANNESBURG	11	12	23	Clear
LONDON	13	13	21	Cloudy
LONDON	6	4	13	Rain
MADRID	10	10	25	Clear
MONTREAL	3	27	28	Cloudy
NEW YORK	11	12	20	Cloudy
OSLO	3	3	11	Cloudy
PARIS	5	4	14	Rain
SAO PAULO	18	18	23	Clear
STOCKHOLM	16	16	27	Cloudy
TOKYO	15	16	24	Rain
TORONTO	1	3	18	Clear
VIENNA	11	12	18	Cloudy
ZURICH	10	10	15	Clear

*For the latest weather conditions contact Swissair.

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THE WEATHER

Forecast: Hot and dry.
Stability: Slight rise in temperatures.

	Yesterday's	Yesterday's	Today's
	Humidity	Min-Max	Max
Jerusalem	14	10-28	28
Golan	22	11-27	28
Nabatieh	—	11-27	32
Safed	—	16-25	25
Haifa Port	—	—	24
Tiberias	—	14-31	32
Nazareth	—	15-26	26
Afula	46	15-28	28
Shomron	31	12-29	29
Tel Aviv	65	16-25	25
B-G Airport	48	13-28	28
Jericho	20	8-14	14
Gaza	78	14-22	22
Beersheba	14	12-31	32
Eilat	11	22-37	37

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

Menahem Eini, chairman of the Lavi project administration will speak at the Haifa Engineers' Club at 1 p.m. today. Table reservations by phone: 04-538268.

Mexican Energy Minister Alfredo Del Mazo yesterday visited the Weizmann Institute of Science as guest of its president, Prof. Aryeh Dvoretzky. He was accompanied by, among others, Israeli Ambassador to Mexico Moshe Arad and the Mexican Ambassador, Raul Valdez Aguilar.

A Wizo daycare centre, donated by the Clure Foundation, was dedicated yesterday in Yavne in the presence of Mrs. Vivien Duffield-Clure, Lady Sieff of Brimpton, Weizmann Institute president Prof. Dvoretzky, Mrs. Suzie Eban, Yavne Mayor Yehuda Berz, World Wizo president Raya Jaglom, World Wizo Executive chairman Michal Moda'i, World Wizo child welfare chairman Adina Matalon and members of the World Wizo Executive.

ARRIVALS

Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Croll, Canada; Mrs. Pam Garner, Mr. and Mrs. Berrie Lubner, Susan, Tony and Mark Lubner, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Maritz, Mrs. Dore Rubin, South Africa; Mrs. Milada Ayrton, Switzerland; Mr. George Shul, Mr. Manny Hezari, USA; All guests of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, to participate in the 17th annual Board of Governors meeting.

Gush debates Weiss ouster

By JOEL GREENBERG
Jerusalem Post Reporter

The Gush Emunim secretariat met late last night to debate the proposed ouster of secretary-general Daniella Weiss and an overhaul of the movement's policies and representative bodies.

An opposition group led by Rabbi Yoel Bin-Nun demanded the changes after Weiss led a rampage by settlers in Kalkilya a week ago, following a petrol bomb attack near the West Bank town. The opposition charged that Weiss and Rabbi Moshe Levinger had monopolized power and become increasingly involved in violent vigilante activity, which had isolated the movement from the public.

Handbills denouncing Bin-Nun were distributed yesterday in West Bank settlements and anonymous phone calls threatened him and his family.

Weiss said last night that her proposed ouster was "unethical, uncomradely and ineffective," and it was necessary that she remain in office.

Sources in Gush Emunim said that under a proposed compromise, Weiss would remain, but organizational responsibilities would be transferred to Uri Ariel, an opposition candidate. Hanan Porat would be put in charge of the movement's information network.

Explosive device

HAIFA (Itim). - An explosive device at a soldiers' hitchhiking station near the Haifa Bay checkpoint was safely dismantled early yesterday morning.

HOME AND FOREIGN NEWS

Despite deadlock in Israel

Hussein in Damascus in bid to win support for international meet

Post Middle East Staff and agencies

King Hussein travelled to Syria yesterday on the third leg of a whirlwind tour to convince other Arab leaders of the viability of an international peace conference, despite the political crisis in Israel.

Hussein believes the time is opportune to probe Arab opinion and to push for an Arab summit, since Israeli indecision over a peace conference is likely to forestall such a meeting for months, Israeli analysts said. The king made brief visits to Cairo and Baghdad earlier this week.

But the more Hussein confers with Arab leaders, the less consensus he is likely to garner for convening the conference, the analysts added.

Hussein, however, is anxious to be seen consulting with Arab leaders about the international conference to avoid diplomatic isolation, the analysts said.

That concern is particularly acute in the wake of reports of Israeli-

U.S.-Jordanian negotiations over a peace conference formula.

Jordanian newspapers yesterday said that the Israeli government's failure to endorse an international conference showed that neither side in the divided Israeli cabinet was sincere in wanting to make peace.

"Peres, who has long maneuvered to gain time and seem like a sincere advocate of peace, was only paying dearly for his game of cunning, deception and lies," said the independent daily *Al-Dustour*.

Meanwhile, reports published in London said that Syria and Egypt had been holding secret talks to discuss the possible composition of a pan-Arab delegation to a peace conference.

The contacts between the traditional rivals reportedly took place at the instigation of the Soviet Union and Saudi Arabia.

The U.S. and the Soviet Union have reportedly offered Syria a guaranteed place at a Middle East peace conference and injections of Saudi capital in return for Syria

dropping its support for Iraq in the Gulf War.

But Iran has reportedly countered these offers with a guarantee of continued cheap oil supplies on which Syria greatly depends at this time of severe economic crisis.

In Tunis, meanwhile, a new and re-united PLO executive committee met yesterday to discuss the prospects for a peace conference, and the PLO's rift with Egypt.

There were reports yesterday that the PLO would send a delegation to Egypt to ease the strain that resulted from criticism of Cairo at the Palestine National Council meeting in Algiers last month.

The PLO executive committee meeting is the first since the PNC conference, where several hard-line, Syrian-supported factions became reconciled with PLO chief Yasser Arafat. At the Algiers meeting, the PLO ruled out the possibility of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to any peace conference and insisted on an independent PLO delegation.

Politicians should set clear date for poll

Bruno calls for end to 'climate of uncertainty'

By AVI TEMKIN
Post Economic Reporter

Politicians should set a clear date for elections and end the climate of uncertainty in the economy, Bank of Israel Governor Michael Bruno said yesterday.

He said that nothing was as damaging to economic stability as prolonged uncertainty, and urged politicians from both camps to continue to collaborate on economic issues even if elections are called.

The governor's remarks reflected the feeling in economic circles that the economy has entered a very dangerous period, as a result of the political stalemate within the coalition. Some politicians, like MK Haim Ramon of Labour and Minister-without-Portfolio Yitzhak Moda'i of the Likud, have warned

against a lengthy election campaign.

Bruno attended the Knesset Finance Committee meeting which approved a proposal to impose a 3 percent levy on foreign credits to the private sector. According to the Bank of Israel, the levy is necessary to prevent Israel from being inundated by foreign loans, and to allow the central bank to exercise greater control over monetary developments.

But the inter-party collaboration on the committee could well disappear on Monday when the ball-out scheme for the country's moshavim appears on the agenda. The Likud MKs are expected to oppose the scheme to rescue the moshavim. Most of which are affiliated with the Labour Party.

Student leaders expelled

By JOEL GREENBERG

Two Palestinian student leaders, accused of organizing disturbances at West Bank universities, were expelled yesterday to Jordan.

Marwan Barghouti, 28, and Khalil Ashour, 39, were sent across the border in the Arava under the supervision of Red Cross officials. Barghouti last week cancelled an appeal against his deportation to a military review board, and Ashour withdrew a petition to the High Court of Justice. Both said they had no faith in the Israeli legal system.

Barghouti, of Kobar village near Ramallah, was arrested in April after disturbances at Bir Zeit University, where he was student council president. Ashour, of the Askar re-

fugee camp, was arrested in March after unrest at An-Najah University.

An IDF spokesman said the two men were senior Fatah activists who incited students and organized violent demonstrations and widespread disturbances at their campuses.

In July 1978 Barghouti was sentenced to four years in prison for being a member of Fatah, participating in explosives training, and manufacturing a bomb.

Ashour was imprisoned from 1970 to 1982 after being convicted of being a member of Fatah and throwing a hand grenade at an army vehicle in Nabulus in 1968.

Thirteen Palestinians have been expelled since the August 1985 cabinet decision on tougher security.

Shamir:

'PLO wants Gaza as down payment'

Jerusalem Post Staff

"The PLO wants the Gaza Strip as an advance," Prime Minister Shamir said yesterday. Addressing university students who support the Likud, Shamir said that "the PLO is not achieving its aims by terror and violence and is therefore trying to use diplomacy."

The prime minister was apparently referring to a statement by former Gaza mayor Rashid Shawwa yesterday to the Associated Press in which he said: "Peres told me before the last election [in July 1984] that Israel would be willing to give up 80 percent of the territory of the West Bank." Shawwa added that when he met secretly with Peres seven months ago, "Peres was more cautious and spoke about parts of the West Bank and Gaza, but nothing definite."

Peres's spokesman said that Shawwa's remarks were "baseless" and declined further comment, AP reported.

Shamir said that if the PLO controlled Gaza, it would turn it into a base from which Soviet and Arab weapons could threaten Israel.

Schools closed as Arab councils intensify strike

By DAVID RUDGE

SHFARAM. - Thousands of Arab schoolchildren missed lessons yesterday as Arab local councils intensified strike action in support of demands for equality with Jewish local authorities.

Municipal services in all 46 Arab towns and villages inside the Green Line were also shut down.

It was the second one-day strike of the local councils in the past fortnight but the first time schools had been included.

The mood among representatives of the national committee of Arab local councils was sombre as they discussed ways of trying to press the government to honour its pledges to them.

National committee chairman Ibrahim Nimr Hussein, who is also mayor of Shfaram, summed up the meetings with government officials

by saying no progress had been made on any of the issues.

The Arab council heads are angry over what they described as the government's failure to fulfil promises on housing development, better education facilities and increased municipal budgets.

The councils have accumulated debts of over NIS 30 million in the past two years, but promises to consolidate the deficits have not been met, they said.

Similarly, pledges to increase development project funding and raise municipal budgets as part of a phased programme to bring them in line with the budgets of similar sized Jewish authorities had turned out to be "empty promises," they charged.

The councils are to stage a two-day strike next Thursday and Friday, although schools will only be shut for one day.

'Jordan border sealed'

TEL AVIV (Itim). - The IDF blocked all efforts to infiltrate into Israel via the Jordan River in the past 16 months and foiled all but two attempts to escape from the country by crossing the river. Deputy Chief of General Staff Ehud Barak said yesterday.

Summing up his tour of duty as OC Central Command, which ended last week, Barak told reporters here that there had been 10 attempts to escape through the Jordan Valley, including two by terrorists who had been involved in attacks in Israel. Eleven arrests were made.

There were nine attempts to penetrate Israel during Barak's tenure and most of them were foiled immediately. However, one infiltrator was caught only after 10 days.

Vehicle stoned

Jerusalem Post Reporter
Stones were thrown last night at an Arab van near the Shmuel Hanavi neighbourhood in Jerusalem, smashing its windshield.

The driver of the van, who is from Ramallah, said he saw a group of youths hurling the stones on a street corner as he drove down Ramat Eshkol Boulevard on his way out of Jerusalem.

To Anna Kaplun
Our deep and sincere condolences on the sudden passing of your dear
Father
Management and Staff
Yatour Travel
and the Sokolovsky Family

We announce the untimely passing of our most beloved and dearest
YITZHAK KIDRON ז"ל
The funeral will take place today, Friday, May 15, 1987, at 3 p.m. at Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan cemetery. The shiva will be at the home of the deceased, 29a Einstein St. Haifa.
The Bereaved:
Garda, Asaf and Yoram Kidron
Ditta and Eliezer Bar-Avraham
and Family
Shoshana Kidron and Family

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A MEMORIAL SERVICE honouring
IRWIN GORDON ז"ל
Director of the Hospital for the past 24 years will take place on Tuesday, May 19, 1987. At 3 p.m. we will gather at the grave in Har Hamenuchot, and at 4 p.m. at Ezrath Nashim Hospital.

Jerusalem Association for Neighbourhood Self-Management extends its heartfelt condolences to
Joel Siegel
on the death of his wife
JUDI ז"ל
Bob and Malki and Elan, Nili and Alon Lapidot

With great sadness, we announce the passing, on May 11 (Iyar 13), after a long illness, of
CHARLOTTE HYMAN ז"ל
(née Stoops)
of Bourmemouth, England (formerly of Swansea and Liverpool)
Beloved wife of Alex
Much-loved mother of Jennifer (Eligoloff) and Maurice and mother-in-law of Marilyn.
Much-loved grandmother of Mischa, Giselle, Jeremy, Benjamin, Doron and Talia.
We shall forever be inspired by her determination and will to live.

With infinite sadness we announce the unexpected death of
DANIEL JOSEPH MARK LITTMAN ז"ל
on May 2, 1983 in Switzerland at the age of 23.
Mourning by:
His parents: Mr. and Mrs. David Littman
His sisters: Ariane and Diana
His grandmother: Mrs. Renée Orebi
and the family in Europe, America and Israel
"I am dumb, I open not my mouth, because Thou hast done it" (Psalms 38:10).

In deep sorrow, we announce the death in Paris, on May 14, 1987 (15 Iyar 5747) of
JOSEPH SCHULDENFREI ז"ל
after a long illness.
The Family

Our dear
YOSEF KETAYIB
is no more.
Mourning:
Son, Shimon Ketayib
Ketayib, Ketaivitz, Okon
and Mitzenzander Families
Lisa Weidenfeld, Ram

Genealogical Researcher
Tel. 02-622-0711

Military defies governor general, names ministers

Struggle for power after Fiji coup

Post Political Staff and Agencies

The South Pacific witnessed its first coup d'état yesterday when Fijian soldiers stormed Parliament House in Suva, arrested Prime Minister Tanosio Bavadra and declared a new government.

Lt. Col. Sitiveni Rabuka, who led the bloodless coup, suspended the Fijian constitution and announced he would head an interim government of ministers pending elections which would "restore civilian rule and go back to democracy."

But following the coup, Governor-General Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau declared a state of emergency and assumed executive power. However, Rabuka defied the governor-general, who represents Britain's Queen Elizabeth II in Fiji, by announcing the council of ministers who form the interim government in a broadcast on state-owned Radio Fiji.

Most prominent in the council announced by the military was Ratu Sir Kamiseva Mara, prime minister for 17 years before losing to Bavadra's Indian-dominated coalition last month. Mara was made foreign minister.

Rabuka, who will head the council, earlier said he had also abolished the governor-general's post.

There were no incidents after the coup and life went on as usual in the capital. There were no soldiers in Suva's streets and communications, cut immediately after the takeover, were restored.

Hours after the takeover, Rabuka, 38, told a news conference he had assumed command of the 2,700-strong royal Fijian military forces after seizing his superiors at gunpoint and abducting them.

Rabuka was the third-ranking officer in the force. Fijian army chief Brigadier Ratu Epeli Nailatikau was in Australia on a visit yesterday morning when Rabuka led 10 men on the raid. Nailatikau's deputy was Lt.-Col. Jim Sanday, who was among those being held.

Rabuka, who had previously shunned the political limelight, said Bavadra and his colleagues would remain under house arrest although they had not committed any crimes.

The military takeover followed weeks of racial unrest triggered by general elections last month. The polling put in power for the first time a government dominated by ethnic

Indians, who slightly outnumber ethnic Fijians.

Rabuka said he launched the coup because of unspecified "planned activities by certain groups." He said he had considered the move before the April 11 election.

Fiji, about 2,240 kilometres east of Australia, is a popular tourist spot and one of the most prosperous island states in the South Pacific.

Rabuka told the news conference his intervention was "absolutely necessary" to protect the interests of all communities.

Ethnic Indians, descended from 19th century indentured labourers, make up about 49 per cent of Fiji's 715,000 people, and ethnic Fijians about 47 per cent. The remainder are other Pacific Islanders and people of European or Chinese descent.

Indians have traditionally dominated the nation's commerce, while Fijians controlled the government. The army is made up almost completely of ethnic Fijians.

The coup was immediately condemned by New Zealand and Australia, both of whom have warships in the area. New Zealand Prime Minister David Lange said he did not rule out a regional response to any call for help from Fiji's legitimate leaders.

Yesterday's coup, while itself of a strictly domestic nature, has raised the spectre of widespread Libyan-inspired unrest among other micro-states of the South Pacific.

While there is no indication of Libyan involvement in the Fijian coup, regional attention has been focused on the increasingly close links that are being forged between nearby Vanuatu and Libya.

Indeed, the former British-French condominium which was known as the New Hebrides until its independence seven years ago, shows all the signs of becoming the centre of superpower rivalry.

Vanuatu, whose capital, Vila, boasts a population of 15,000, has established an impressive network of international relations, boasting ties not only with Britain, France and Australia, but also with the Soviet Union, China, East Germany, Poland, Vietnam, North Korea, South Korea and the Netherlands.

But all eyes are on the budding relationship with Tripoli, which is expected to open a "people's bureau" in Vila this month, its first diplomatic mission among the micro-states of the South Pacific.

VIGILANTES

Barak said the Military Police had found that the officer had acted correctly in opening fire but the officer's commanders decided he should not have allowed himself to get into that situation. Instead he should have waited for reinforcements before moving in.

In another incident, a soldier in Nablus beat up an Arab "apparently to let off steam." A senior officer spotted him, filed charges and the soldier was brought before a military court which sentenced him to two months imprisonment.

A beefed-up deployment of Border Police in the territories was also being planned. He added that a relatively large percentage of student demonstrators involved in recent West Bank disturbances were from the Gaza Strip.

He also said that though security forces had scored successes in uncovering terrorist cells, the group responsible for the recent spate of petrol-bomb attacks in the Kalkiya area was still at large. He said 59 petrol bombs had been thrown in the West Bank since the beginning of this year, as compared with 50 during a similar period last year, and 75 during the same period in 1985.

A petrol bomb was thrown yesterday at an Israeli car near Dura south of Hebron. The bottle smashed the car window but exploded harmlessly on the ground.

In the Gaza Strip, a roadside charge was set off next to a car on the Gaza by-pass near Netzarim junction, but caused no injuries or damage.

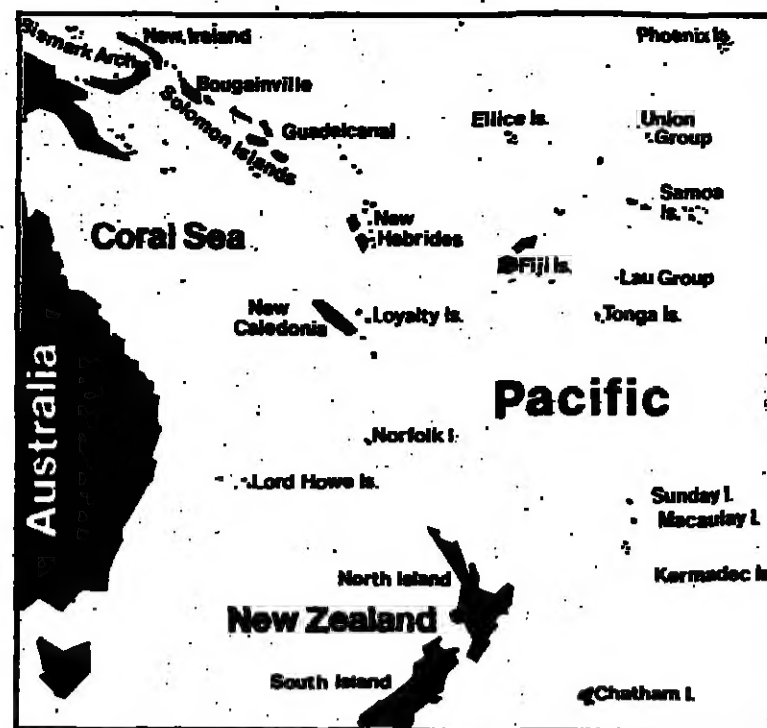
RELIGIOUS PARTIES

which have faced severe cutbacks resulting from the budget crunch.

Internal differences notwithstanding, the NRP is not expected to board Labour's bandwagon at present.

The campaign for Shas's votes also continues. Peres met with the party's spiritual mentor, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, on Tuesday. The party's Council of Torah Sages is expected to convene next week to decide on its guidelines.

Agudat Yisrael's two Knesset members would not provide Labour with the majority it needs. MK Avraham Shapira yesterday spoke of the economic damage which would ensue from elections at this time, but party sources have informed both Labour and the Likud



Rabuka led Unifil battalion

By DAVID RUDGE
Jerusalem Post Reporter

ROSH HANUKKA. - Fijian troops serving with the Unifil in south Lebanon performed their duties as usual yesterday, remaining tight-lipped about the military takeover of their country.

Soldiers on leave said they were anxious for news, especially from their families back home, although they had been reassured by reports that there had not been any fighting.

They were, however, reluctant to comment on the fact that the bloodless coup was engineered and carried out by former commander of the Fijian battalion in Unifil Lt. Col. Steve Rabuka.

"We are soldiers serving with the UN peacekeeping force in south Lebanon and our duty and loyalty is to the force," said an officer.

Rabuka served as the Fijian contingent commander in Unifil from

June 1980 to July 1981.

In 1984 he served as head of the Fijian battalion in the Multi-National Force in Sinai.

Since then he has been third in command of the 2,700-strong Fijian royal military force - nearly half of whom serve either with Unifil in Lebanon or the Multi-National Force in Sinai.

Unifil personnel who worked with Rabuka during his stint as Fijian battalion commander said he had been well-liked and highly respected by all who knew him, including residents of south Lebanon.

A renowned rugby player who amply demonstrated his brawling skills against Israeli teams during his stints in south Lebanon and the Sinai, Rabuka was apparently awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1981 for his service as Fijian battalion commander with Unifil.

3.6 million in Jordan

AMMAN (AP). - An official said yesterday Jordan issued identity cards to 3.6 million people.

The Jordanian Civil Status Department registered 3 million in the East Bank, about 315,000 people in the West Bank and 338,491 abroad.

Barbie 'will not go' to his trial

LYON (Reuters). - French court officials tried in vain yesterday to get former Gestapo official Klaus Barbie to attend the fourth day of his trial in Lyon where he stands accused of crimes against humanity.

Barbie, 73, abruptly walked out in the middle of hearings Wednesday, saying he had been kidnapped from his home in Bolivia and was being detained illegally in France.

Presiding Judge Andre Cordini held up proceedings for nearly an hour as a court clerk was despatched to Barbie's suite of three cells in the grim Saint Joseph jail nearby to formally request his attendance.

The clerk returned alone to read Barbie's reply: "I will not go." The statement was signed "Klaus Almann," the alias under which he obtained Bolivian citizenship in 1957.

Feminist faction wooed by parties

Women hold key to power in Iceland

REYKJAVIK (Renter). - The balance of power in Icelandic politics could now be in the hands of half a dozen MPs from the country's flourishing Women's Alliance, enshrined in their headquarters in a ramshackle former hotel in central Reykjavik.

The women, who doubled their representation in parliament in the April 25 general election to six of the total 63 seats, are being wooed by their male colleagues in attempts to form a coalition government.

Outgoing Prime Minister Steingrimsur Hermannsson, whose centrist Progressive Party holds 13 seats in parliament, was this week charged with trying to put together a new government.

However, the opposition Social Democrats have called for the conservative Independence Party (IP) and the Women's Alliance to join forces with them. Such a coalition would control 34 of the 63 seats in parliament.

But politicians say it could still be months before the next coalition is formed. The IP is Iceland's biggest party and a member of the current ruling coalition.

Meanwhile, the women's response to the coalition proposal has been to hold daily grassroots meetings at the Hotel Vik, a one-time hippie squat, where posters and graffiti adorn the walls and the coffee in plastic cups comes at the price of a 30 crown (75 cents) donation.

The discussions have been kept a closely guarded secret, much to the chagrin of journalists and the other political parties.

"We are not as experienced as the others - and we don't want the press to distort our position on the issues," said Anna Olsdottir Bjornsson, who just missed getting elected to parliament for the Women's Alliance.

The feminists' silence has been widely criticized, but they are proud that no details have leaked from their daily 3 p.m. meetings.

When a separate women's candidacy was first announced before elections for the Reykjavik City

Egypt severs ties with Iran

CAIRO (Reuters). - Egypt officially announced yesterday it was breaking all ties with Iran as security sources said 37 Moslem extremists from a group allegedly funded by Tehran had been arrested.

A Foreign Ministry statement said Egypt was closing the Iranian interests section in Cairo, expelling the resident Iranian diplomat and recalling Egypt's sole diplomat from Tehran.

"The decision to expel the Iranian mission was a result of actions incompatible with diplomatic protocols and in violation of the Vienna accords governing diplomatic activity," the statement said. It did not elaborate.

Security sources, however, said 37 members of an underground Moslem extremist group said to be funded by Iran had been arrested. They said the group had been planning to assassinate Egyptian officials.

The statement said the Iranian diplomat in Cairo, Mahmoud Mohiaddin, and another Iranian official who operates from the Swiss Embassy, had been given seven days to leave the country "indefinitely."

No details have emerged yet about the underground group linked to Tehran. The security sources said its existence came to light during investigations into an

attack last week on former interior minister Hassan Abu Basha.

Egypt's semi-official press has hinted that the banned Jihad group might have been involved in the shooting and wounding of Abu Basha, who was responsible for rounding up many Moslem fundamentalists after the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981.

Islamic fundamentalism has been on the rise in Egypt. But the majority of Egypt's Moslems are Sunnis, whereas Shi'ite Moslems are dominant in Iran.

Egypt is one of Iraq's staunchest Arab allies, providing Baghdad with material, political and diplomatic support in its war against Iran, now in its seventh year.

Cairo maintained close ties with Teheran until the 1979 Islamic revolution toppled the shah, who lived in exile in Egypt until his death in 1980.

The Moslem Brotherhood, banned from political activity but tolerated as a more moderate Moslem fundamentalist group, won 35 seats in the Egyptian parliament last month through an alliance with an opposition party.

The Brotherhood's main demand is establishment of an Islamic state in Egypt but its spokesmen say they do not approve of violence to achieve their aim.

Kidnappers show tape of U.S. captive

BEIRUT (AP). - Moslem kidnappers yesterday released a videotape of American hostage Alann Steen, who appeared in good health despite his captors' earlier claims that he was dying.

In the three-minute tape released to the Beirut newspaper *Al-Nahar*, Steen repeated his kidnappers' demand that Israel free 400 Arab prisoners.

The tape, delivered to the newspaper in a white envelope, showed Steen reading a statement in awkward English phrasing that suggested it was written by his captors.

It was the first communication from any group of kidnappers since April 2, when fellow American hostage Jesse Turner said in a videotaped message that Steen would die in a few hours.

Steen, 48, of Boston, Massachusetts, said his captors of the Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine had saved his life.

U.S. pursuing talks on Gulf cease-fire

MANAMA, Bahrain (AP). - American envoy Richard Murphy said yesterday the U.S. was consulting with other parties, including the Soviet Union, on ways to bring about and enforce a cease-fire between Iran and Iraq.

Murphy said "we're in very intensive talks right now" with the Soviets and other permanent members of the UN Security Council, China, Britain and France.

He said the U.S. was pursuing talks with those nations in an effort to bring about a cease-fire and put in place "appropriate enforcement measures" to keep the peace.

Bahrain was the last stop on a seven-nation Gulf Arab tour that Murphy, an assistant secretary of state, described as a mission of "peace and friendship."

FOREIGN BRIEFS

Israeli experts sceptical about Syrian coup

Post Middle East Staff

Israeli experts were sceptical yesterday about reports of an attempted coup in Syria on Sunday.

The experts questioned whether the attempt indeed took place and, if so, whether 79 Air Force pilots were arrested and 40 hung, as reported.

Reports of the coup originated Wednesday in Paris, which is the residence of Rifaat Assad, brother of Syrian President Hafez Assad. The experts suggested that the reports thus could reflect tensions between the brothers.

The experts noted, however, that political unrest previously has been centred in the Air Force ranks. They recalled a reported coup attempt last September in which four pilots were supposedly executed.

McFarlane denies soliciting funds from Saudis

WASHINGTON (Reuters). - Former presidential aide Robert McFarlane yesterday denied he secretly solicited money from Saudi Arabia to support the "Contra" rebels in Nicaragua.

The *Washington Post*, quoting "a diplomatic source familiar with the Saudi version of events," said yesterday McFarlane had requested up to \$25 million from the Saudis in 1984 and 1985.

Asked about the report during his fourth day of testimony to congressional hearings on the Iran-Contra scandal, McFarlane said: "I stand by everything I have testified to."

He has told the hearings that he never asked the Saudis for money for the Contras at a time Congress had banned official U.S. aid to the rebels.

Schoolboys take 9-year-old's sled, then kill him

MOSCOW (AP). - Two Ukrainian schoolboys stole a 9-year-old boy's new sled, tried to bury him alive in snow and finally forced him into a river where he died, the newspaper *Pravda Ukraine* reported.

The newspaper identified the attackers as fifth-grader Yuri Mukhin and third-grader Sergei Tsarevsky, about 12 and 10 respectively.

The report did not say what has happened to the two boys. But it did say Soviet law does not permit putting such young children or their parents on trial.

The attack occurred in Kommunarok in the eastern Ukraine.

The newspaper traced Mukhin's and Tsarevsky's behaviour to their broken home lives. It said Mukhin's parents are both alcoholics and he lived with an aunt. Tsarevsky does not remember his father, and his mother "leads an immoral lifestyle and is an alcoholic."

U.S. WANTS

(Continued from Page One)

U.S. officials were clearly impressed by what they regarded as the very significant progress that had been achieved between Peres and Hussein. *New York Times* columnist William Safire yesterday reported that Peres and Rabin met secretly with Hussein in London and agreed that an international conference would quickly lead to direct Arab-Israeli negotiations, and that the full plenary members, especially the Soviet Union, would not be in a position to impede or veto bilateral agreements.

American analysts suspect that Peres may have erred by not including Likud leaders more actively in his behind-the-scenes diplomacy that led to the signed document with Hussein.

They also think it was a mistake for both Jordan and Egypt to deliberately avoid any serious contact with Shamir and other Likud leaders. "You can't make peace with only half of Israel," one American analyst said.

Other U.S. officials said that Shamir has privately and repeatedly sought to arrange a summit meeting with President Hosni Mubarak, but those overtures have not been accepted.

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Soviet friendship delegation here

Soviet rapprochement with Israel depends on the convening of an international conference, said Sergei Brozdin, the head of a six-member Soviet delegation that arrived here last night.

The Soviets are the guests of the Israel-Soviet Union Friendship League and are to participate in events to mark the 42nd anniversary of victory over the Nazis.

Brozdin, who is an author, said that the growing number of Jews being allowed to leave the Soviet Union "has nothing to do with the chances of rapprochement between Israel and the Soviet Union. Such rapprochement can come about only if the hoped-for international conference on the Middle East is convened as quickly as possible to solve all the current problems existing between Israel and the Soviet Union. (Itim)

SWORN IN - Malta's new Nationalist government headed by Prime Minister Edward French Adams was sworn in early yesterday.

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Art or eyesores – Jerusalem's unsolicited sculptures

By MEIR RONEN
Post Art Editor

Jerusalem has had three more outdoor sculptures added to its list of nearly a hundred over the past few weeks – without any of its private citizens being asked whether they want them or not.

One of the works, commissioned by Rabbi Shlomo Goren from Ya'acov Agam and installed on the balcony of Goren's study overlooking the Western Wall, did not get the approval of the city's planning commission.

The other two were erected with city approval by the Jerusalem Foundation and, like the Agam, were funded by donors from abroad. One of them consists of a pair of metal goats painted yellow and suspended over a flower garden bordering the footpath of Rehov Emek Refaim. The second, due to be inaugurated on May 25 with the arrival from the U.S. of donors Muriel and Philip Berman, is a huge 20-ton welded-steel abstract sculpture, painted flat white, by the noted American painter-sculptor-designer Alexander Liberman. It is located on a small rise at the Sderot Eshkol-Shuafat crossroads, at the foot of French Hill.

The Berman also footed the bill for the huge red Calder stable near Mount Herzl which, like the Liberman, was enlarged from a tiny model. The Calder maquette, not much larger than a man's fist, was made in France after the artist's death and lacks all the life that the artist was able to put into the hand-made model. The Liberman, made here, but also without the artist being present, seems a more successful translation, though its colour makes it look out of place when seen against the Jerusalem stone of the apartments on French Hill. Tens of thousands of drivers pass it daily.

The pair of yellow goats, by Bezalel Academy graduate Yuval Ronen, are welded to a long metal spar bolted six metres up a wooden telephone pole. Passing drivers have told me that they believed the work was some sort of commercial logo. As the dramatically unbalanced structure could be in imminent danger of tipping over onto passers-by, it has been stayed by several pairs of metal cables that interfere with the original, cleaner look of the work; but without them it would be clearly unsafe.

What these three works have in common is obtrusiveness, the first in a highly sensitive public area, the others in places where countless drivers and local apartment dwellers will see them day after day. The same is true of the Calder and the large volumetric abstract sculpture by Helen Escobedo of Mexico, constructed at the entrance to East Talpott last year.

The reaction of many Talpott and Bayit Vegan residents to the Calder and the Escobedo has been: "Who needs them?"

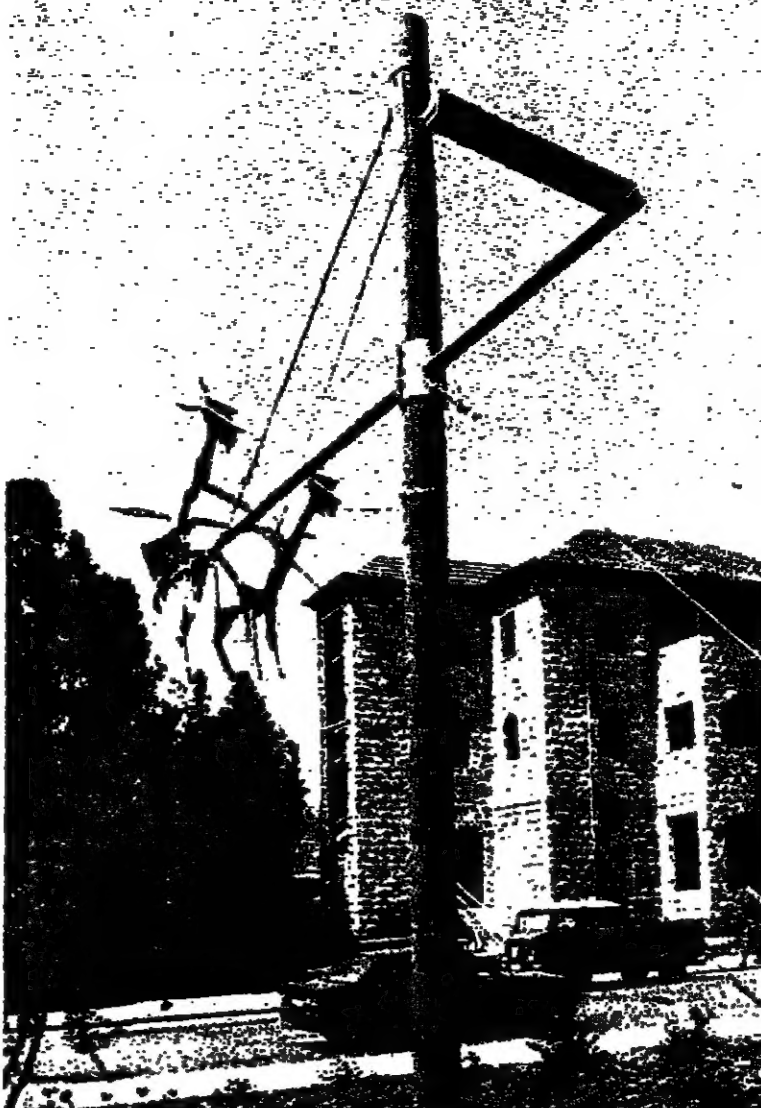
Those who do need such projects comprise the artists, the donors, the contractors and various foundation officials, notably the art adviser to the mayor. The current art adviser, Tamar Goldschmidt, does not think it is practical to ask Jerusalemites what they think. "We'd never get anything done," she told *The Post* this week, begging the question of whether anything more needs to be added to the city's streets. The result is that decisions of approval of a work and the finding of a suitable site are pretty much in the hands of a single person, with the necessary city approval following as a matter of course.

It was Mayor Teddy Kollek who originally launched the campaign to enliven and enrich the city with major artworks; the first was the Hans Arp sculpture set just off King George Street. Two decades later, the city has been proud to issue a catalogue of its much touted "museum without walls." But artists, architects and art lovers – not to mention many irate citizens – are far from happy with everything that has gone up.

Paradoxically, one of the city's most popular sculptures is also universally acknowledged to be one of its ugliest: Niki de St. Phalle's "Monster" in Kiryat Yovel, which is built around three fun slides that are in constant use. But getting a famous artist to design a work for the city is no guarantee of success. Not only the Calder is "dead," but also the huge Max Bill in the garden behind the King David Hotel. It has turned out to be meaningless, though the eminent Swiss artist's intellectual, geometric conception looked great on paper.

Professor Bill's design is happily located at a site where people have to seek it out; and if they don't like it, they needn't go back. But many of the city's artworks are rammed down the average Jerusalemite's visual throat. Told that art is good for them, they have to like it or lump it. The city refuses to recognize that one man's pleasure is another man's eyesore.

City officials admit that there is no apparatus for dismantling or changing the sites of sculptures that have lost their appeal. They haven't even considered such a procedure. When they eventually do, they will find themselves hampered by a recent amendment to Israel's copyright law that protects the "moral right" of a work of art and the artist who was commissioned to make it. In Tel Aviv, Mayor Shlomo Lahat, widely pilloried for inflicting a notably kitschy design by Agam on Dizengoff Circle, has been unsuccessfully trying to



Twin goats suspended over a footpath on Emek Refaim Street. (Brian Hendler)

get rid of the huge Tumarkin iron-and-glass sculpture standing opposite his municipal offices, a work that requires maintenance to prevent it becoming a public hazard; pieces of glass have fallen from it in the past.

All outdoor sculptures require maintenance of one sort or another. In many cities in the United States, donors of public sculptures are not only required to guarantee funds for maintenance, but to guarantee to provide for the work's removal if a neighbourhood poll requests this. Many Jerusalemites feel it is time for the municipality to demand this of the Jerusalem Foundation.

One way to prevent unpopular but perhaps otherwise worthwhile works being thrown on the scrapheap might be to establish a new sculpture garden in the city, possibly near the projected new zoo south of the Gonen area. Many such gardens have sprung up on private estates and farmland all over the U.S. One of them was established by donor Philip Berman in Pennsylvania and huge works by a number of Israelis are featured in it. Another is currently being completed by noted art dealer Andre Emmerich, who handles Liberman and also takes an interest in the Israeli art scene. The Jerusalem Foundation would not find it too difficult to obtain funds for such a project, nor to assemble a panel of selectors of the widest possible taste. But the beauty of a sculpture garden is that citizens can take it or leave it.

Many of Jerusalem's sculptures are scattered unobtrusively in various municipal gardens, and on the Hebrew University's two campuses. The ones at Givat Ram, by George Rickey, Henry Moore and Yigal Tumarkin, are not popular with the students, even though the Moore has become a focal point for lawn sitting.

Some sculptures left in public parks have been vandalized, like the Kenneth Noland in Tel Aviv's Yarkon Park; it was recently refurbished and last month relocated on the forecourt of the Tel Aviv Museum. An esoteric piece of geometric minimalism, the Noland is of some mild interest to the cognoscenti, but absolutely lost on the general public. While aesthetically more interesting than Agam's extraordinarily banal effort at the Western Wall, it has no message to redeem it; not that even the pretence of being a Holocaust memorial can redeem the Agam, which has been likened to a row of fire hydrants.

But the Jerusalem Municipality might well ponder that an eyesore at the Wall is not much more offensive than other eyesores which tens of thousands of Jerusalemites are forced to pass twice a day for the rest of their lives.

Ministry vetoes surrogate motherhood

No 'Baby Ms' in Israel

By JUDY SIEGEL

Post Science and Health Reporter
Surrogate motherhood, made famous by the Baby M case in which a woman was paid to be artificially inseminated, will not be permitted in Israel, according to regulations set by the Health Ministry this week.

The regulations were signed by Health Minister Shoshana Arbeli-Almosino following a year of experiments at Hadassah-University Hospital in Jerusalem and Sheba Hospital in Tel Hashomer in which human eggs were donated by single women and fertilized and implanted into married but hitherto infertile women. The complex issue was studied for many months by officials in the Justice and Health Ministries.

The Baby M case, which took place in the U.S., ended with the "paying" parents permitted to keep the baby, and the natural mother finally getting visiting rights if she presents herself as a "friend of the family."

According to the new regulations here, a woman may not "rent out" her uterus to carry a fetus and then hand it over to another couple. In addition, a fetus produced by *in vitro* fertilization may not be implanted in a relative of the donor. (A well-publicized case recently involved a 48-year-old American woman who was carrying a fetus produced from her daughter's ovum and son-in-law's sperm because her daughter had had her uterus removed.) Gynecological experts were unavailable for comment yesterday. However, several months ago, Prof. Yosef Schenker, head of obstetrics and gynecology at Hadassah, told *The Jerusalem Post* that he hoped the Hadassah experiment would be allowed to continue as a permanent project to enable childless women to bear children. The regulations also state that:

- Frozen fetuses will be stored in a fetus "bank" for no more than five years.
- If a woman becomes widowed and wants a fetus produced from her ovum and her late husband's sperm implanted in her uterus, she must wait at least a year after the fertilization.
- A woman whose ovum has produced a fetus *in vitro* and who has since divorced her husband will be permitted to carry the baby as long as her ex-husband gives his permission in writing.
- A single woman may try to become pregnant by *in vitro* fertilization only if her own eggs are used; a social worker's report must support this request. Donated ova may not be transplanted into the uterus of an unmarried woman.
- If a fetus, produced by *in vitro* fertilization of an egg from a married woman, is frozen, and the woman dies, the fetus will be destroyed. However, if the deceased was unmarried, the fetus may be donated to another woman if the donor explicitly gave her permission before her death.

UK chief rabbi's article draws fire

By DAVID HOROVITZ

Jerusalem Post Correspondent
LONDON. – British Reform and Liberal rabbis have reacted angrily to an article in *The Times* last weekend by Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits, in which he linked German Reform Jewry's attempted assimilation and the Holocaust.

"The nineteenth century German founders of Reform Judaism believed with absolute faith that the process of emancipation leading to full equality for Jews would be completed if only they would give up being different," Jakobovits wrote. "This idol of individual assimilation...exploded in the very country in which it was invented, to be eventually melted down and incinerated in the crematoria of Auschwitz."

In a letter published yesterday by *The Times*, Rabbi Sidney Brichto, chairman of the Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues, described Jakobovits's arguments as "totally unacceptable theology."

Brichto defended the founders of Reform Judaism, "which still enriches the lives of over two million religious Jews." He stressed that Jakobovits is head of the Orthodox wing only, and not of all Jewry in Britain and the Commonwealth.

Auschwitz survivor Rabbi Hugo Gryn stated that the idea of Reform Judaism bringing on the Holocaust "debased the currency of the Holocaust." Other Reform and Liberal leaders also expressed regret at Jakobovits's remarks.

But Jakobovits told *The Jerusalem Post* yesterday that the Liberal and Reform rabbis were defending themselves from an attack he never made. "Some Reform leaders are deliberately misreading and distorting what I said. I made a plain statement of historical fact: that the early German Reform sought equality through emancipation. I didn't say that this caused the Holocaust, only that the Holocaust exploded that illusion."

Reb Sharabi at Yad Eliahu's Yemenite happening

When Reb Haim Sharabi was 25, he flew on an eagle's wings toward redemption. Now he's 63 and the rabbi of a tiny Yemenite moshav community in the Jerusalem corridor, where he has lived from the first day he arrived in the country.

There are 30 other families in the moshav, most of them religious, except he says, "some of the young people. But what can you do?"

Sharabi was sitting in a front-row seat at the Yad Eliahu Sports Stadium this week, at a convocation of the country's Yemenite community in honour of Shalom Sharabi, a rug-weaver who was the greatest 17th century Yemenite poet.

Some 10,000 people paid NIS 25 for a night out that included blessings from several rabbis, performances by popular Yemenite singers, and an Ashkenazi TV announcer who promised an evening of "kef and hallel," which in street slang might translate as "dope and feasting" but here meant simply a jolly good time. Not everybody paid, said an usher; there were numerous guests of honour, like Rabbi Sharabi.

Sharabi, like many Yemenite rabbis, has written a book about Shabazi.

Almost all the women in the audience brought plastic bags full of food, and the sweet and sour smells were stronger than the sweaty smells of the sports stadium. The money raised at the event will go towards the construction of a memorial to Sharabi, who, said Sharabi, "was better at his job than 2,000 Jewish Agency officials."

Of course, Shabazi living in the 17th century never had a \$500m. budget with which to encourage immigration, which he called redemption.

It's not clear whether the money will be used to build a synagogue, a museum or a library. According to Sharabi, ancient manuscripts of Shabazi's poetry are in private hands in various parts of the country. "I have a relative," he said, "who has dozens of them. A beautiful collection. He's going to donate them." Officially, the manuscript collection is for something called Sukkat Shalom Shabazi. "A sort of Yad LeShabazi," said Sharabi.

Occasionally, people stopped by and kissed Sharabi's hand. He had deep bags under his eyes, which was shaded by the brim of a faded bowler hat. He was dressed in the style of an Eastern European Jew; when asked why, he answered: "That's the way rabbis dress here." It certainly wasn't the way rabbis dressed in

Yemen. "You have to be a really great rabbi to choose a different kind of hat here," he said. He didn't seem to realize that the bowler-like hat was a Polish fashion from the 17th century. But he did make the point that his long jacket and trousers were made from dark blue, not black cloth.

"Shabazi was a real prophet," said Sharabi, "who knew that one day the Jews would find redemption." Bar-

ren women, he added, would take dust from his grave, "and put it by their beds. Within the week, they'd fall pregnant." As was written in the Bible, Shabazi used to say that the Jews of Yemen would go to their redemption by air – "Not by foot and not by sea, but by air. Of course," he continued, "over the centuries many Yemenite Jews have come to Israel. Sometimes this was very difficult."

His left hand rose over his head and came down: "Like this, in round about ways they came."

Redemption hasn't come yet because not all Jews are religious, he said.

Sharabi wouldn't admit being disappointed with the state of Israel, even if the young people at the moshav aren't as religious as they should be.

When asked about politics he rolled his eyes upwards and said: "It's between me and Him." He didn't want to comment on former chief rabbi Ovadia Yosef's involvement in politics. "Nobody tells me who to vote for," said Sharabi, adding "I vote according to what's good for

religion. One of these days all the Jewish people will be religious and then the redemption will come."

Yisrael Kessar, the Yemen-born Histadrut secretary-general, was one of the guests of honour at Yad Eliahu. He was the only non-religious person on the dais, but like all the other men there, he donned a kippa for the occasion.

Prime Minister Shamir was supposed to come, but it was a night of coalition politics. Only males performed on the stage, beginning with a boy's choir from a regional council. The boys all wore blue shirts, black pants and brown-rimmed blue velvet kippot. Their enunciation was not very good, nor was the sound, nor was the sound system, so it was difficult to make out the words, which Rabbi Sharabi explained were written by Shabazi.

"Imagine it, he wrote a poem about going to Jerusalem for Shabbat," said Sharabi. "He was a prophet. He knew."

In the rows above, women passed food to each other. In the aisles, men danced.



Guess who? A satirical Australian TV programme lampooning Libya's Muammar Gaddafi has been lambasted by Tripoli as part of "the Australian government's disinformation campaign against Libya." (Reuters)

Austrian Jews call for 'moral renewal'

By ILONA HENRY

Jerusalem Post Correspondent
VIENNA. – Austria's Jewish community yesterday called for national moral renewal and said Austria should support the victims of World War Two rather than defend those who said they only did their duty.

"We, the Austrian Jews, offer our help in solving the current problems," it said in a statement linked to the controversy concerning President Kurt Waldheim and the history of Austria.

"But this offer can only produce the desired result if there is a clear and unmistakable decision in favour of the Austria of the victims."

Waldheim, who was barred last month from entering the U.S. as a private citizen because of suspicion about his war record, says he only did his duty while serving in Hitler's army after Germany annexed Austria.

Paul Gross, the newly elected president of this country's Jewish community of 9,000, made the statement at a news conference. He said there had been two Austrias since the annexation in March 1938: that of the victims and that of the perpetrators.

"But only one of these two ways is politically and morally defensible," he said. One could not be both a "brave soldier" doing one's duty and a victim of Nazism.

Gross said he personally was not calling for Waldheim's resignation.

"I do not think that a resignation of the federal president would be desirable for the Jewish community, because then the Jews would be made the scapegoats. We [Austrians] must be able to come to the conclusions that what happened [in the Nazi period] was wrong. He who represents Austria must say so, unsolicited and in a loud voice, or face the loss of his prestige and risk undermining Austria's prestige in the world."

Gross added that Austrian leaders had been preoccupied in the past year with making "cosmetic" changes in the country's image abroad.

Lord Sieff tours 'frontline'

By DAVID RUDGE

Jerusalem Post Reporter
METULLA. – Lord Sieff of Brimpton went on a fact-finding tour of "frontline" northern settlements this week.

He met with town and village leaders, as well as South Lebanese dignitaries who had been invited to Metulla.

Civic heads spoke of the need to expand industry in the region and open up export markets for their products.

Sieff, the retired chairman of the

British department store chain Marks and Spencer, said he was looking into the possibilities of expanding industry and helping to establish further contacts between the northern settlements and Jewish communities abroad.

Metulla Mayor Yossi Goldberg said residents of the so-called "confrontation-line" settlements in the North were anxious to improve their quality of life to compensate for the fact that they live under the threat of Katyusha rockets and attempted terrorist attacks.

Lag B'Omer: Fewer, but more expensive weddings

TEL AVIV (Item). – Only 29 couples are getting married here on Sunday during the Lag B'Omer holiday, a one-day break in the seven-week mourning period between Pesach and Shavuot when marriages are permitted. Forty wed-

dings were performed this time last year.

This year's figures reflect an overall decline in the number of marriages this year, said Rabbi Yehuda Landau, head of the rabbinate's marriage bureau.

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'We have to go back to our roots... to creativity, settlement, education... without violence'

YOEL BIN-NUN chose his words carefully, pausing to think between sentences. The man who led a revolt this week against the leadership of Gush Emunim sat on a stone wall outside the movement's offices in Jerusalem, as if at a remove from the feverish activity inside.

Gush Emunim was facing its first real split, and its two-storey building had been divided between the two camps. Upstairs, in the offices of Amana (Gush Emunim's settlement movement), were members of the opposition. In the suite below was Secretary-General Daniella Weiss, Rabbi Moshe Levinger of Hebron and their supporters. There seemed to be no communication between the two floors.

Sitting outside, Bin-Nun seemed calm, though his mind was clearly on his next steps. Our conversation was repeatedly interrupted when he was called for consultations.

Bin-Nun's move against Weiss was prompted by the rampage she led through the West Bank town of Kalkilya two weeks ago after a firebomb had been thrown at an Israeli car near the town.

Bin-Nun and a group of founding members of Gush Emunim had long been critical of Weiss's style of leadership, which they saw as belligerent, preoccupied with vigilante activity, and alienating the public from the movement. The debate first began after the arrest of the Jewish terrorist underground, when Bin-Nun called for some serious stock-taking by the movement. He later dropped out of active membership, disenchanted with the direction Gush Emunim was taking.

In recent months, the tension has mounted again, as reflected in the pages of *Nekuda*, the settlers' jour-

nal. Weiss and her opponents debated Gush Emunim policies in heated articles, and one issue was entitled, "Anything but a Split."

The split emerged this week. Bin-Nun, Hanan Porat (who had also stopped his activities in the movement) and a group of key Gush Emunim members met and decided unilaterally to call a secretariat meeting to oust Weiss and chart a new course for the movement.

They charged Weiss and Levinger with monopolizing power, and called for the democratization of Gush Emunim, increasing its membership, and setting up a broad representative assembly. Caught by surprise, Weiss and Levinger at first resisted holding a secretariat meeting, but later relented.

BIN-NUN, a teacher and school principal who lives in the settlement of Ofra, outlined his reasons for discontent this week in the following monologue:

"The message of Gush Emunim is the Land of Israel for the People of Israel; that's what we should be communicating. Gush Emunim was not established in order to solve the security problem or to develop Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza in isolation from the rest of Israel.

"The deterioration began five years ago, when Rabbi Levinger began his preoccupation with security. This has now put us in a corner, as if we were back at the bunker in Yamit [the bomb shelter which served as the last stronghold of the opponents to the withdrawal from the Sinai].

"We have to go back to our roots. We've become introverted and have isolated ourselves from the public. We have to go back to creativity, settlement, education, to creating a

THE GUSH DIVIDED

Winds of disenchantment with the leadership are blowing through Gush Emunim. Divisions have come out into the open and an influential section of the movement is challenging the 'belligerent' style of some of those at the top. The Post's JOEL GREENBERG reports.



Yoel Bin-Nun... 'Gush Emunim was not established for security reasons.' (Yakir Zar)



Secretary-general Daniella Weiss... rampage through Kalkilya set off the spark. (Isaac Harari)

better atmosphere for the public. We have to bring the public back to the land, and the land to the public. We should encourage people to again travel to all parts of the country and renew their sense of belonging. We must wage our campaign as a struggle for people's hearts and minds, without violence or pursuing confrontations with Peace Now. We have to encourage dialogue, a different style, in order to be ready for the great political debate which is now beginning.

"The Gush should totally stop its preoccupation with security, and the militant games surrounding it. There are no less attacks in Jerusalem than in Judea and Samaria, but we don't hear shouting about security there. When something happens in Judea and Samaria, there's a hue and cry because the issue has become politicized.

"It's created hysteria. Every time a rock is thrown, they say the government has failed. People travel the coastal road even though there has been a terror attack there, and they visit the Galilee despite the Katyushas. But in Judea and Samaria no one travels because someone throws stones. This is a psychosis which has to stop.

"Sometimes the defence establishment fails, but it's the only one we have. We rely on it, and we're behind it, with its successes and failures. There are failures, but we can't go around saying, 'We told you so, we can do it better.' That would mean setting up vigilante committees to save Metulla or Nahariya. It would be the disintegration of the State."

"We have to have a positive message. We have to encourage people to visit Judea and Samaria, to see the

settlers and meet the people. The public will have to decide whether to give back these areas, but how many people know what is at stake? They should familiarize themselves with the subject under discussion. This is basic, democratic and important."

Bin-Nun rejected the idea that even a positive Gush Emunim campaign would lead to inevitable clashes with those Israelis opposed to its objectives. "There's no such thing as an unavoidable clash." We need meetings to encourage understanding; to listen to one another, to conduct a dialogue and create a different climate and political culture.

"We need to understand what the other side is saying, what we disagree and agree about, without intimidation or the need to change positions. It's ultimately a struggle for hearts and minds, for the vote, not a situation where the stronger one overpowers and persuades the other.

"There's a difference between pushing for a certain policy constructively, through building and progress, and a style of violence and intimidation. We have to break out of our sectarian image and reach out to the broader public, including the national religious community.

"Five years ago, there was a sense that those who supported us did so wholeheartedly, and those who opposed us did so with reservations. Today, those who support us have reservations and those who oppose us do so wholeheartedly.

"I said it five years ago when the Gush began its preoccupation with security: The security situation will not be changed, but we will have lost the people."

The movement goes back on the streets after two years. Other groups are also demonstrating

THE REAWAKENING OF PEACE NOW



PEACE NOW has booked Tel Aviv's Kikar Malchei Yisrael for Saturday evening, but it will only call a demonstration if there has been a significant development in the peace process, says Amiram Goldbloom, one of the movement's most active leaders.

"The potential for a big demonstration is there," he maintains. "We are not scared of calling a big meeting - we can get at least 50,000 people in Kikar Malchei Yisrael - but we want to use it at the right time." Until the "right time," Peace Now is planning a series of vigils and smaller protest meetings, accompanied by a media campaign.

The leaders of the movement insist that they are not disappointed by the turn-out at Sunday night's demonstration in Jerusalem. "Anything over 500 would have been good, and we calculate that there were some 2,000," says Goldbloom. "You have to remember that we

Daniel Gavron

haven't been on the streets for two years, and that it was a normal workday in Jerusalem - not Saturday night in Tel Aviv."

Goldbloom points out that Peace Now is not a movement that makes its own initiatives, it reacts to situations. "We don't go and settle anywhere - nor do we send delegations to meet with Arab leaders," he notes. "We represent public opinion in encouraging the peace process."

The movement is not out to promote itself, he continues. If the members thought that they could best help the peace process by sitting at home, they would be happy to do so; but they think the time has come to speak out clearly. Currently, Peace Now is overhauling its organizational framework, getting its membership lists up to date, and prepar-

ing to act if the situation demands it. Peace Now, as in the past, is run by a voluntary central council which meets in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv and coordinates local committees all over the country. The movement still functions without an office and without a single paid official.

The basic policy of Peace Now has not changed since that famous letter of March 8, 1978, signed by 350 IDF reserve officers and men and which told Menachem Begin:

"A government that prefers settlements across the Green Line to the ending of the historic conflict will in fact be asking the question of the justice of our cause. A government policy that leads to continued rule over one million Arabs is likely to change the Jewish democratic nature of the state and would make it difficult for us to identify with the basic direction of the State of Israel."

Tzali Reshef, one of the authors of the letter and the movement's chief spokesman over the years, explains that by its very nature, Peace Now is a movement which has ups and downs, reaching climactic moments during Camp David and the Lebanon war.

"We don't yet know whether the current peace process is another high," he admits. "We are waiting to

see what develops, and prodding the government towards peace. We have seen in the past that, when a genuine chance for peace emerges, Israeli public opinion changes dramatically."

Peace Now is prepared to support the peace process without the participation of the PLO; but most of the leadership believes that the PLO should be included, if it is prepared to take a clear stand renouncing terror, and state clearly that negotiations are the only way to solve the Palestinian problem.

They doubt whether Foreign Minister Shimon Peres is being realistic in thinking that Yasser Arafat can be completely bypassed. Prime Minister Shamir is probably right when he says that the PLO will be brought into the process at some stage, the movement's leaders believe, but if the PLO continues to support terror, they favour going ahead without it.

"Peres should not think we are supporting his initiative," stresses Goldbloom. "We support the peace process - not the actions of one man. We want Israel to extricate itself from the 'swamp' of the occupied territories. I don't think the Alignment is talking enough about the danger of the occupation to Israel."

Goldbloom says that Peace Now is in constant touch with other movements, such as Netivot Shalom, the religious peace movement, East for Peace, the Sephardi group, and representative of the neighborhoods and development towns. He values these relationships but claims that Peace Now has a central role.

"In the past nine years, we have seen that it is Peace Now that brings out the large numbers," notes Reshef. "I think we have the ability to translate the feelings of the public into action in the street."

EVEN before Peace Now called its demonstration this week, East for Peace issued its own call to support the peace process, points out Shlomo Elbaz, who helped found the group in 1982. East for Peace was present, with other movements, at the Jerusalem rally, and it is a full partner in the current campaign, he says.

Quoting his movement's statement, Elbaz states that "a do-nothing policy" is the greatest enemy of peace. He calls on all Israelis - and in particular the inhabitants of deprived neighborhoods and development towns - to support "the efforts now being made by some of our leaders to advance the peace process by means of an international peace conference."

There are encouraging signs of breakthrough, suggests Elbaz, and the historic opportunity for reconciliation must not be missed.

A similar message comes from Uri Simon of Netivot Shalom, which this week mounted a vigil outside the prime minister's residence in Jerusalem with its sister-movement Oz Veshalom. "Israel is facing its mo-

ment of truth," says Simon. "The question is simple: are we prepared to compromise for peace? The issue of an international conference is a matter of procedure - it is not the issue."

The Yom Kippur War showed the danger of perpetuating the status quo, suggest Simon. It is much easier not to make difficult decisions; but also more dangerous.

"As religious Jews, we recognize the sacredness of the Land of Israel," he states. "But peace is a religious value and the saving of lives is also sacred. Relinquishing parts of the land is like an amputation; but sometimes you have to amputate to keep the body healthy."

ONE OF the main speakers at the Jerusalem rally was Amir Peretz, mayor of Sderot in the western Negev, who believes that development towns, poor neighborhoods and the achievement of social equality should be at the top of the government's agenda, but that Israel will

not be able to turn inwards, towards solving its own problems, until the matter of peace is settled.

The 34-year-old Peretz, a Labour man, says that he is proud to have a party leader who "dreams of peace." He has a son of eight, and says: "I feel that peace is vital for my son. If, one day, he has to go into the IDF and defend our country, I want to be sure that we have done all we can to prevent war." He is sure that there are many Israeli parents with similar feelings.

A climate of tension and war serves the rich, he suggests. It is impossible to help the country's poor people when all resources have to be diverted to its security.

People who believe in peace should have the courage to say so openly, declares Peretz, giving the opinion that many in even the Likud are worried by "the threat from the extremists of Gush Emunim."

Peretz emphasizes that he does not want to be "presumptuous," as

he has only been in public life for three years; but he says he has been involved in pressing for Jewish-Arab coexistence since his election.

He points proudly to the fact that his town has initiated a project of exchange visits with the Arab town of Taibe near Netanya. Entire high school classes of Sderot children went to stay in Taibe for 10 days, and Taibe children came to Sderot. "There was a big discussion in Sderot at the time," he recalls, "but we went ahead with the project."

Conceding that there may not be a majority in the development towns which realizes that peace will be to their direct benefit, Peretz is nevertheless confident that the peace process has more supporters today than it had a few years ago.

"There are plenty of Sephardim, plenty of people in the neighborhoods and development towns, who are tolerant and moderate," insists Peretz. "I'm not afraid to be one of the first to speak up for peace. I am confident that I won't be the last."

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Histadrut leader Yisrael Kessar is against elections now, but is all for the peace process. He explains why to MARK SEGAL and argues that in the event of an early poll being held, social issues should not be forgotten

OF PEACE AND PAY PACKETS

HISTADRUT Secretary-General Israel Kessar generally avoids making political statements, so that when he backed Vice-Premier Peres's diplomatic initiative in his May Day speech, his remark drew considerable attention. However, he waffles out loud - in an interview earlier this week with *The Jerusalem Post* - whether the initiative warrants early elections. As he puts it: "The peace process has not sufficiently crystallized for it to carry the entire weight of new elections. Personally, I hold that if early elections are inevitable they should focus on social and economic issues."

With every passing day, he concedes it becomes more difficult for the national unity government to carry on even though economic conditions oblige it to continue. On no account should the government be permitted to smother the slightest chance of movement towards negotiations. Kessar says:

"There's no quarrel (over the fact) that the talks should be direct," he declares. What is in dispute is whether or not to make it easier for the Arabs to enter negotiations by agreeing to an international umbrella. But so much is still up in the air, he worries.

He is concerned about the many imponderables and the numerous unanswered questions. It is a measure of his powerful position in the Labour Party that he feels free to pinpoint the question marks hovering over his party chairman's current crusade. For example - if the umbrella is to be held aloft by all five permanent Security Council members, then non-recognition of Israel by the Soviet Union and China presents a most serious obstacle. What, he ponders - would happen if King Hussein agreed to negotiations irrespective of who participates? And alternatively, what if Hussein should insist on a Soviet presence?

"Let's suppose for argument's sake, that the government agrees to go to an interna-

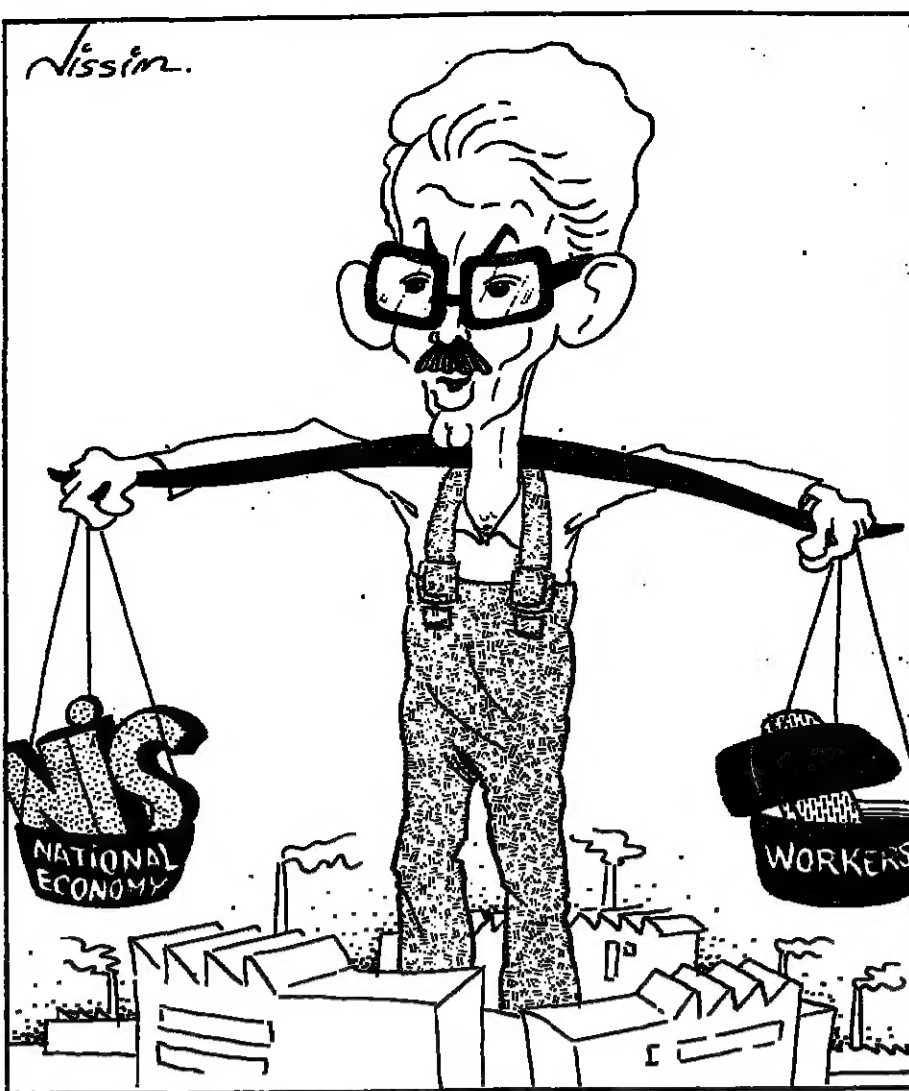
tional conference. I can't see it forgoing the pre-condition of Russo-Chinese recognition. Indeed, how can we ask for formal Arab acceptance and not insist on Russia and China doing precisely the same?" Nevertheless, the Labour front benches insist, everything must be done to ensure that the diplomatic momentum does not ground to a halt.

No, he does not favour early elections "unless both parties want them that much and each side can blame the other for having them." Kessar adds wryly. There is still ample time before it will be absolutely necessary to make a clear-cut decision, he declares significantly.

When I ask if the party fully backs its leadership, Kessar quickly replies: "No question about it. There's full confidence in Peres's leadership in the Knesset. In [secretary-general Uzi] Baram in the party, and in Kessar in the Histadrut. There's no challenge to this trinity," he says with a huge grin at his choice of words.

CONTINUAL attempts have been made to pin down the Histadrut secretary-general's position on the political orthodoxy scale. He has constantly dodged being categorized whether as a dove or a hawk, a hawkish dove or a dovish hawk. Pressed to define himself, Kessar says: "I follow the party line. I'm above all intent on safeguarding the Jewish character of Israel. In the great debate over choosing between people and territory, the Likud says territory is the be-all and end-all. For Labour - people come first."

"My political position is informed by my concern to keep Israel a Jewish state. I accept the map drawn by the late Yigal Allon, with the River Jordan as our security border. I strongly oppose Jewish settlement in heavily-populated Arab areas." He seems to still be under the influence of his latest weekend reading, Barbara Tuch-



man's *The March of Folly*, where he found too many parallels for comfort.

Kessar dismisses "all this to-do about doves and hawks. It's part of us playing chess with ourselves. So far we've only seen Jews arguing with Jews about these issues." In 1970, he notes, Menachem Begin broke up the first national unity government over the issue of withdrawing from Sinai, coining the phrase "not one inch." Well, Kessar remarks sardonically: "He was true to his word. In 1978, he kept not one inch of Sinai."

The Labour leader holds that Israel should enter into negotiations with certain minimum demands, primarily the non-negotiability of Jerusalem, and the security border issue. Too much energy is wasted on arguing these issues in Israel, says this great believer in the dynamics of negotiations. Should talks get underway, people will not necessarily cling to the same positions. "Look what happened when Anwar Sadat came to Jerusalem. Not only Begin changed his stand," Kessar remarks.

TURNING to domestic social trends, Kessar expresses his alarm at the over-

eagerness to flee from the egalitarian philosophy that was the foundation of the Zionist venture. There's nothing wrong in people wanting to raise their living standards, he says. After all, why should a nice home, a car and foreign travel be the privilege of the rich? "But two questions must be asked: is all this paid for by our own efforts, and how will our resources be shared?"

Mention of the rapidly widening gap between the higher- and lower-income groups, brought us to the over-reliance by certain economic sectors on cheap Arab labour from the territories. He regards that as the major trap which caught some people after the Six Day War. "As a small country we have to utilize our capacity for flexibility in adjusting to fluctuations in world markets, premised on a high level of productivity, professional skill and specialization, rather than on cheap labour that enriches the wealthy," he declares.

Kessar deeply regrets that throughout the past 20 years the Histadrut has failed to convince all governments - Labour and Likud - to allow its trade unions to directly

organize these workers. He and his predecessor (Yeroham Meshel) have cleaved to the principle that all workers in Israel must come under the same labour agreement. Involved are 120,000 workers - 80,000 who come in daily from the territories and work in an organized fashion, plus another 40,000 who are unorganized. Here Kessar points to what he considers the real litmus test in this sphere - the Histadrut's considerable achievements in fostering patterns of co-existence in Israel proper between Jewish and Arab workers.

Irrespective of the final disposal of the territories, he hopes for open economic relations like those obtaining in the European Community. Even then the problem of social and wage conditions would certainly not go away, hence his renewed appeal to the authorities to enable the Histadrut to organize workers from over the "Green Line." Until the situation clears up, he prefers that these workers amounting to one-third of the West Bank and Gaza labour force - be gainfully employed in Israel, rather than remain jobless at home. In the meantime there has been a marked increase in their living standards.

Kessar's office on the fifth floor of the Va'ad Hapoel complex reflects the new look he has introduced into the Histadrut. His Yemenite origins emerge in his friendly humour, the mint leaves flavouring his glass of tea and the wall-length "Ode to Kessar," penned by the poet of Rosh Ha'ayin, the Yemenite development town. His academic degrees, the ease with which he handles computer technology and complicated economic issues do not detract from his image as a man of the people.

As head of the Histadrut hierarchy he has had his hands full coping with a series of inherited crises besetting major federation agencies like Solal Boneh and Kupat Holim. Kessar has pressed ahead with his plans of reform, including a shake-up of the Histadrut economic sector's managerial structure, and the strengthening of its control mechanism. He has tried to open up channels of advancement for workers to the managerial level and, as part of this drive, has started a special training school at Beit Berl, named after the late Ya'acov Levinson. "I'm the figure-head," says how he describes his bridging role between Hevat Ovdim, the Histadrut holding company and the trade unions.

He was also continuing to promote the unification of the pension funds - irrespective of the resistance of empire-builders, and he was pleased to report agreement with the Treasury in strengthening their financial underpinnings. Part of his efforts to improve Kupat Holim involves converting each of its hospitals into an independent, self-governing unit, and having a watch-dog committee appointed to each clinic composed of members using its services.

Pressed on how the General Federation of Labour got on with the national unity government, the secretary-general quickly replies: "We have a clear guideline - we are not in opposition to the government, any

government. We are not a Knesset faction - neither in the opposition nor in the coalition - but the representative body of organized labour. We judge all governments by their policies and deeds, irrespective of whether they're Labour or Likud. Thus we signed a one-year agreement for economic stability with Premier Shamir and Finance Minister Nissim. Mapam's aim, for example, is to bring down the government. Our function and duty is to protect the workers."

Talking of government policy, Kessar dwells on how "we've got through the hardest part. I'm referring to the 1984-86 emergency programme. At that time we had 800 per cent annual inflation and unemployment. Now we are at loggerheads over basic social concepts as expressed in the finance minister's original programme and his long-term aims. We will continue to fight his intention of imposing payments on parents and patients. He wishes to overturn the welfare state concept so that only the moneyed classes, rather than everybody, will be entitled to basic social services."

The Histadrut has not given up the struggle against Nissim's tax reforms which Kessar insists will only make the rich richer. He is highly sceptical of the Treasury's assertion that the wealthy will invest their newly tax-free income to help the economy grow. He finds it more than peculiar that in such free-enterprise citadels as the United States and Britain there are capital gains taxes on speculative profits from the money market, but not here.

KESSAR reminds wage-earners that if not for the Histadrut shield they would be much worse off in 1987. Their aim remains to keep the economy on an even keel, for wage-earners are the prime victims of instability and inflation. Wage negotiations with the finance minister have not yet been completed. The Histadrut has set itself the goal of raising the gross (tax-free) wages of the lower-income groups, and of increasing the take-home pay of middle-salaried groups through tax adjustments. The Histadrut is also pressing for a shorter working week. He notes the trend in the business sector towards a five-day working week, saying the change improves working conditions without costing much money.

By its very nature the Histadrut must look beyond bread-and-butter issues. The question is not how to divide up the national cake, but how best to take part in creating the necessary ingredients. Kessar says the Histadrut must adopt a different philosophy to that of its sister organizations in other countries - because it speaks for 90 per cent of the wage-earners, provides 85 per cent of the population with health services and 25 per cent of the jobs. As he says it: "We can never be populists, calling out street demonstrations all the time. As a leadership-shouldering such heavy responsibilities, we can't enjoy the luxury of unrestrained militancy."

In his view, an organization's strength lies in its potential threat, not in over-

LIFE IN AMERICA is cheaper than in Israel, which helped me stay the course during the month we spent there. Not everything is cheap. Renting a two-room apartment at a good address in Manhattan can cost \$3,000 a month. But there is a reason: the space available for housing in that prestigious island is limited by geography, hence the competitive system is impaired.

Where competition does prevail, the effects are striking. In Israel, conditions are not completely competitive, so the government tries to remedy the situation with price controls. The American system works better.

In Israel, each make of automobile is supplied by a single sales agency. If you want a Subaru or a Renault or a Fiat you have to go to the one established dealer, and he gives you a bad time. Why do you have to pay in advance, why must you wait months before getting delivery? Because there is only one agent for the model; also because (the agent tells you) the government fixes prices and leaves such a small margin that he cannot provide a better service.

In America anyone can sell any car for any price, and the difference is stupendous. A lady I visited in San Diego had acquired a brand-new Mercury, complete with electronic ignition and power steering. She had been a reluctant customer because she did not want to spend the money. But she needed to replace her Buick,

a car so old it had started to stall on the road.

Desperate to make a sale, the firm of dealers she visited had reduced the price of the new Mercury from \$14,000 to \$11,000. Still frightened at this big outlay she pleaded it was Friday and the banks had closed. She would come back on Monday, she promised.

No way. They pleaded with her: "How much deposit are you ready to leave?" "Five hundred dollars," she replied, thinking that would get rid of them. "Done," they proclaimed. She paid the \$500 - not in cash but by presenting her credit card - and drove away in a full-sized, brand-new limousine, complete with temporary licence and temporary insurance.

San Diego is near Mexico, she could have smuggled the vehicle across the border in no time. They trusted her, because she had a credit card.

CREDIT-CARDS are indispensable in America, people do not trust cash any more. If you present a \$100 bill it is liable to be refused (it may be counterfeit). Defraying traveller's cheques is not an easy matter either. I needed \$500, and the bank would not honour my draft (though drawn on Barclays Bank) to that amount.

I was saved by the kindness of another lady acquaintance who drew \$500 of her own money and handed it to me in exchange for my traveller's cheques, which she depo-

In a land where overdrafts are forbidden

The Jerusalem Post's DAVID KRIVINE discovers that Americans are suspicious of greenbacks.

sited in her account until they could be cleared.

The banks are tough in other ways. Loans have to be negotiated, and overdrafts are not allowed. A man paid a cheque for his mortgage, overdrawing his current account by 50 cents. He had several thousand dollars at the same bank in a savings account, which in Israel would have been more than enough collateral. Not in the States. His cheque bounced. Correcting that oversight cost him \$15.

I had booked a room at a respectable hotel in San Francisco for four days. The reception manager was agast that I had no American credit card. "But I am a foreign tourist," I protested. It made no difference, he demanded payment in advance for the full four days.

I was deeply offended: "What if I decide to leave after two days?" "Then we'll give you your money back."

"Why should I trust you if you don't trust me?" We settled on a humiliating compromise. I paid for each day in advance. Had I possessed a credit-card they would have been on their knees.

MONEY (in whatever form) rules in the U.S. - it is not surprising that they call it "bread." Everything has to be paid for, even the witnessing of public events. Marvin Hagler and Sugar Ray Leonard earned \$15 million - 20m. each out of their fight. Ringside seats were naturally expensive; but viewing the event on television was not free either.

The concession had been farmed out to one of the cable TV companies for money, which the company recovered from its customers. Individuals wanting to watch the fight live on TV had to pay \$60 for the privilege. Those who could not afford \$60, including the author of these lines, did not see the fight. There are no free lunches in the U.S.

There are however cheap lunches, and that is the other side of the coin. You have, of course, to choose where to go. A meal in a place of repute in New York can cost as much as \$100 a head. That is one end of the scale. At a nice cafeteria in a shopping mall on the periphery of Philadelphia, we had clam chowder soup and as much salad as we liked from a well-laden help-yourself counter, that included fresh pineapple and other fruit, so we had dessert

as well. The bill for three people, including coffee, was \$15.

At a Japanese restaurant in San Francisco we bought ourselves a fully-fledged dinner, including a tasty small hors d'oeuvre (on the teryaki), soup and excellent beef teriyaki together with deep-fried vegetables: all with proper sauces. Likewise one bottle of Japanese beer and plenty of tea. The bill for two people came to \$22.50.

These prices are low, not because the government has frozen them, but because competition makes them low. Government control of prices (as in Israel) would mean, inevitably, cost-plus. Airline prices were cost-plus even in the U.S., till air travel was deregulated under the Carter administration. Again, the effects were dramatic. My acquaintance in San Diego used to pay around \$500 to visit her sons in New York. Now she pays \$198 return, for a travel distance greater than between Tel Aviv and London.

The paradox in the U.S. is the co-existence of harsh competitive conditions (which should minimize profits) and high living standards (indicating that there are all the same surpluses to distribute). This contradiction is mystifying. If prices are low, how can profits be high? In Israel the reverse applies: prices are high and profits low. There must be a missing factor. Any Israeli visiting the U.S. cannot refrain from asking himself what that missing factor might be.

It does not take him long to find the answer. In America supplier and customer stand face-to-face, without any intermediary. The contest is uncontrolled, no holds are barred. A company that succeeds will make money. The more money it makes the more it is respected, nobody will object to its wealth.

But if a company fails, it is broke, and the owners lose their shirts. There is no one to save them. They will be trodden underfoot; neither press nor public will give them a thought.

In Israel companies do not go broke. Between supplier and customer stands a merciful intermediary - the government. Failing companies do not fold in Israel, the government saves them - whether it is El Al or Solal Boneh or Kupat Holim or the universities or Beit Shemesh Engines.

This policy of official benevolence is inspired by an understandable de-

sire to prevent the workers of the ailing company or institution from being put on the street. The motive is laudable but the cost prohibitive.

At stake is not just the budgetary outlay required for these rescue operations. The real (and ruinous) waste of resources derives from the influence this has on the method of operation of business undertakings. A company that depends entirely on its own efforts for survival will take the hardest of hard decisions in the pursuit of efficiency.

A company that can fall back on a benign uncle in Jerusalem who will save its skin will be as efficient as is convenient. The difference between the moderate level of efficiency which meets Israeli needs and the maximum efficiency that must be achieved as a condition of survival in the States spells (in the long run) the difference between the standard of living in Israel and the standard of living in the States. It is as simple as that.

EXCUSES ARE CONJURED up for Israel's economic lag. One is the small size of the country, which is nonsense. Switzerland is almost as small as Israel (six million inhabitants), yet its living standards are as high as America's.

What America does have that Switzerland and Israel both lack is space. There is an enormous availability of land in the U.S. and the population spreads over it. Suburbs of the big cities extend endlessly, each family inhabiting a house with an acre or more of garden. Individual shops in the locality are a thing of the past. They are replaced by shopping malls, serving a whole zone.

If a suburban resident wants to buy a loaf of bread he must travel two or three miles at least. Therefore he must own a car. Everybody owns a car - not just each family but almost every adult person. There is no public transport to speak of in these areas. Any bus service would have to cover enormous distances and would be travelling three-quarters empty. The investment is not worth making.

Foreign observers cannot help finding the situation scary. What happens if an old couple living on their own have no car, cannot afford a taxi and are physically unable to walk two miles to the shop and two miles back? It seems to me that they could starve! No wonder that good neighbourliness is highly valued in the U.S.

Public transport exists where populations are densely concentrated, as in the heart of New York. Some people have push apartments in town, but city centres are generally occupied by low-income groups, including often a majority of blacks.

In de-concentrated Los Angeles I went to visit Disneyland with a young family and their two children. By midday they were still in full swing, but I would have been happy to regain my hotel. I could not - unless I was prepared to pay \$40 or \$50 for a taxi (the hotel was something like 30 miles away). I was stuck in Disneyland, for lack of bus or subway.

An American I spoke to blamed

the authorities. "If a state plans a public transport system it gets only half the cost back from the federal government. But outlays on building highways are covered almost entirely from federal sources. Thus, every state has an incentive to build roads for people with cars, rather than buses for people without. That compels everybody to buy a car, giving a filip to the motor industry."

Technical motor journals in Europe look down on American cars as inferior in such things as speed, acceleration, stability on bad roads and stability when turning corners. What they do not understand is that the American car serves a different purpose. It is an extension of the home - a room on wheels in fact.

It needs to be spacious, comfortable, silent and reliable. The American car is all of those things. It does not need speed - the legal limit is 55 miles per hour (though it has been raised to 65 mph on some interstate highways). It does not need special suspension for bad roads, because there are no bad roads. It does not need special equilibrium when turning corners at speed, because corners are few and far between.

Most of the time is spent travelling long distances in straight lines. The winding byways prevalent in Europe are scarce in this country of turnpikes and 12-lane freeways.

IN THE U.S. it is firmly believed that capitalism is efficient and socialism (that is, anything run by the government) is inefficient. In the U.S., the above theory looks like being true. Private enterprise is ex-

remely impressive, public services less so. Americans are the first to tell you what they think about the operational ability of their armed forces (witness Jimmy Carter's lamentable attempt to rescue embassy hostages in Teheran).

The famous cable cars in San Francisco are a case in point. They are, to be sure, a picturesque and much-photographed relic of a bygone age. Criminals or lovers jump on or off them in a multitude of romantic movies located in that zany city. But the municipality to which they belong runs them in a ham-handed way consistent with the popular image of civil-service lunacy.

You can wait at the Fisherman's Wharf terminal half an hour till a tram appears. We stood in a queue more than a hundred metres long. When they come they are soon overcrowded. People stand in the gangways and cluster on the footplates, jutting from the side of the yellow street cars (the last time I saw such a thing was in backward Cairo).

The danger of passing vehicles is overlooked, in what is after all the world's most safety-conscious country. I stood waiting on the pavement at a "Don't Walk" sign. When the message changed to "Walk," I started to cross the road, only to find myself almost run over by one of those trams.

A passenger clinging to its step called out apologetically, as his clattering conveyance passed me: "It can't stop." You are supposed to know these things in San Francisco.

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At Meron, where Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai is buried.



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LAG B'OMER IN JEWISH HISTORY AND TRADITION

THROUGHOUT THE generations many pseudo-holidays and festivals have taken root in Jewish tradition. During the Second Temple period, a volume was compiled cataloging the days in the Jewish year which commemorated miracles or historical events. Though its name was Megillat Ta'anit (scroll of fasting), days listed in it were laid down by the sages of the Sanhedrin as semi-holidays when fasting, eulogizing, and memorial addresses for the dead were prohibited. Megillat Ta'anit is arranged chronologically and after each event the Megilla concludes and that day became a holiday. Megillat Ta'anit enumerates 59 such holidays and their sources and yet, Lag B'Omer is not among them.

In accordance with the opinions of Rav and Rav Hanina in the Babylonian Talmud (Rosh Hashana), all the festive days mentioned in Megillat Ta'anit were abolished after the destruction of the Temple and are no longer observed as holidays, with the exception of Hanukkah.

In contrast, Lag B'Omer has become rooted in Jewish tradition as a national and religious holiday and interrupts the period of mourning associated with the counting of the Omer. According to one widely held view, this period begins on 22nd Nissan and continues until the new moon of Sivan with the exception of Lag B'Omer - the 33rd day of the Omer. There is no mention of this holiday in the Talmud nor the Midrash. The reason for its significance is unknown, and all explanations of this day found in Halacha or Jewish Wissenschaft are purely conjectural.

The mourning period during the days of the counting of the Omer, though firmly implanted in Jewish tradition, has no source in the Talmud or ancient Midrashim. It became a custom from the Geonic period (10th century) onwards. Its primary source can be found in the tractate Yebamot in the Babylonian Talmud. There it is recounted:

Rabbi Akiva had 12,000 pairs of disciples, from Gabbath to Antipatris and they all died at the same time because they were disrespectful to one another. The world was desolate until Rabbi Akiva visited our masters (rabbi) of the youth and taught Torah to them (Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Judah, Rabbi Yossi, Rabbi Shimon, and Rabbi Eliezer ben Shammua, etc.) and they preserved the Torah at that [critical] time. We further learn that his disciples died between Passover and Pentecost (Shavuot). They all died a cruel and agonizing death - traditionally from a plague.

Rabbi Nahman reported that it was croup.

The story of Rabbi Akiva's disciples who died between Pessah and Shavuot contains no reference at all to Bar Kochba wars against the Romans in 132-5 CE, during Rabbi Akiva's lifetime.

The Jerusalem Talmud (Ta'anit) reports that upon seeing Bar Kochba, Rabbi Akiva declared him to be the King Messiah. Rabbi Yohanan ben Torta disagreed and retorted: "Akiva, grass will sprout on your cheeks after your death [i.e., you will be dead and buried] and still the son of David will not have come."

Maimonides also associated Rabbi Akiva with the Bar Kochba rebellion. However, there is no support for the thesis that 24,000 students of Rabbi Akiva died during the wars of Bar Kochba.

In spite of the differences between the Babylonian Talmud and the Midrash versions regarding the number of students of Rabbi Akiva who died and the sin that caused their death, both versions agree that they did not die during the Bar Kochba wars. Furthermore, the Bar Kochba wars took place in Judea whereas the locale of the disciples was in the north. According to both versions, it is difficult to comprehend why these students who died as a result of a specific sin gained the merit of having their memories perpetuated through a long-standing imposition of stringent customs of mourning in

all of Israel. Even the heroes of Israel from the days of Joshua ben Nun onwards never attained such a distinction.

A DIFFERENT story, with some parallels to the Rabbi Akiva story, concerns the house of Rabbi Judah the Nasi and is found in the Jerusalem Talmud (Sanhedrin). It relates that Rabbi Eliezer quoting Rabbi Hanina mentioned the people of townships belonging to the house of Rabbi Judah who were assembled at Lod to proclaim a leap year. The evil eye befell them and they all died, whereupon the procedure for intercession was transferred from Judea to the Galilee.

As 24 townships appear in the Jerusalem Talmud as opposed to the Babylonian Talmud's 24,000 disciples of Rabbi Akiva, it is plausible to assume that both versions refer to the same event. However, the locale is different. According to the Babylonian Talmud, Rabbi Akiva's yeshiva was in the north of the land of Israel whereas the Jerusalem Talmud places it in Lod. Rabbi Akiva's permanent abode was in central Palestine, in Bnei Brak, near Lod.

In order to explain the change of location of Rabbi Akiva's yeshiva from Bnei Brak to Gabbath and Antipatris, one may assume that after the destruction of Betar and Judea, Rabbi Akiva and his students moved northwards, since the Galilee was not involved in the events following Bar Kochba's rebellion.

Although we have no hint in the Talmud linking the deaths of the disciples of Rabbi Akiva with the Bar Kochba wars, there is an ancient and reliable source which testifies to a connection between those deaths and the spiritual resistance con-

ducted by Rabbi Akiva against the Romans, a resistance that resulted in his execution.

According to the epistle (iggeret) of Rabbi Shira Gaon, written approximately 1,000 years ago, Rabbi Akiva's death preceded those of his disciples, who were killed by the Romans because they convened public assemblies to teach Torah.

"After Rabbi Yossi ben Kisman passed away, Rabbi Akiva offered himself for execution and Rabbi Hanina ben Tradion was [also] killed; and, thereafter wisdom was diminished. Rabbi Akiva had produced many disciples; but they were persecuted and Israel had to rely upon Rabbi Akiva's secondary students..."

According to Rabbi Shira Gaon whose words are based upon ancient traditions, Rabbi Akiva's disciples did not die as a result of plague as reported in the Babylonian Talmud, nor from the evil eye as the Jerusalem Talmud's version has it, but, in fact, during the Roman measures against the study of Torah.

After executing Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Hanina ben Tradion, the Romans then murdered all the disciples of Rabbi Akiva. According to the Jerusalem Talmud, this took place near Lod where Rabbi Akiva had his rabbinical academy, or - according to the Babylonian Talmud and the Midrash Rabbah - in the north, and only seven disciples of Rabbi Akiva survived to flee to the south where there was no persecution.

It is difficult to reconcile Rabbi Shira's report with the versions of the Talmud and the Midrashim, for it is evident that the students of Rabbi Akiva died while he was still alive. It was Rabbi Akiva himself who went to "our masters of the south" to teach them Torah and according to the Midrash, warned them not to repeat their former colleagues' evil ways.

From Rabbi Shira Gaon's report it appears that he had a different text of Yebamot in which it was not Rabbi Akiva who travelled southward to "our masters" but the remnants of his students following his death. It also appears from the Mishna in Gittin that the Roman persecution was in Judea and not in the south. Hence, the remaining sages assembled and went southward, succeeding in preserving the Torah at that time.

Rabbi Shira Gaon's opinion would seem to provide a rationale for Jews throughout the ages accepting the laws of mourning during the period of the counting of the Omer: the students suffered martyrdom as did their mentor Rabbi Akiva.

However, even according to Rabbi Shira Gaon, this tragic event took place a number of years after the Bar Kochba wars and there is no connection whatsoever between their

deaths and the Bar Kochba rebellion. It was a sequel of the spiritual struggle waged by Rabbi Akiva and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and their disciples against Roman oppression.

One further authentic source which supports the Talmud and Midrashim and completely contradicts the version of Rabbi Shira Gaon, is found in Kohelet Rabbah in which Rabbi Akiva himself recounts the tragedy that befell his students: "I had 12,000 students from Gabbath to Antipatris and all died during my lifetime between Passover and Pentecost so that finally there remained for me only seven." He said to them, "The former students only died because they were envious of one another in their knowledge of Torah. Do not follow their example!" Immediately, they arose and filled the Land of Israel with Torah.

Midrash Tanhuma has a shortened but exceptional version of the Talmud and Midrashim: "A story [is told] of Rabbi Akiva who had 300 students in his youth and they all died and if it were not for the fact that he produced seven disciples in his old age, there would not have been any Talmud named after him." (i.e. quoted in his name). Although the versions of the Midrashim appear to comply with the text of the Babylonian Talmud (with the exception of the smaller number of pupils in Tanhuma), one should note an important distinction between the Talmud and the various versions of the Midrashim. The latter omit any mention of the plague by which the students of Rabbi Akiva died, consequently, one may read into them the theory that they were killed in war by

the Romans. This is not the case with the version in the Babylonian Talmud in which one cannot discover any connection with the Bar Kochba wars nor tie those deaths to the Roman persecutions.

THERE HAS BEEN a tendency to link Lag B'Omer with the Bar Kochba wars, commemorating the victory of the soldiers of Bar Kochba over their Roman enemies on that day. As a result, Lag B'Omer has been established and accepted as a national and religious holiday. This theory is difficult to accept in light of the fact that the Bar Kochba rebellion ended in total military defeat and caused the destruction of the Jewish population in the Land of Israel. The damage caused was even greater than that which ensued from the destruction of the Temple. After that earlier defeat, a majority of Jews remained in control of most parts of the Land of Israel. With the exception of Jerusalem, most cities and towns in Judea and Israel were still populated.

This was not the case following the Bar Kochba rebellion. Judea was laid waste and her cities emptied of population. One non-Jewish historian described the Land of Israel after the Bar Kochba rebellion as a cemetery. This being the situation, how was it possible to celebrate a transient victory and establish it as an everlasting festival, when all the soldiers were ultimately massacred?

Another opinion is that of the geonim and has been accepted in Halacha since the 10th century. It states that Lag B'Omer marked the

end of the rampant deaths among Rabbi Akiva's disciples. Ha-Mein, in his commentary to Yebamot notes: "Consequently, one does not fast on that day and it is the custom also not to marry from Passover until this day (Lag B'Omer)." This opinion is accepted by the medieval commentators and codifiers. Rabbi Jacob Ba'al ha-Turim says in Orah Haim, "Some take haircuts from Lag B'Omer onwards, for it is said that the disciples of Rabbi Akiva ceased to die." This is similarly recorded in the Shulhan Aruch.

The third opinion is that of the kabbalists, headed by the Ari, Rabbi Isaac Luria of Safed. Lag B'Omer is the anniversary of the death of the Tanna (teacher of the Mishnaic period) Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai who expounded the Kabbala and was an outstanding leader in the struggle against Roman oppression.

According to Jewish mysticism, each year on the anniversary of his death, his soul is elevated to even higher spiritual levels. Consequently, Lag B'Omer is a day of rejoicing for the righteous. Rabbi Haim Vital, the Ari's most distinguished disciple described in his writings how the Ari led his small son to Meron and there cut the lad's hair as is now customary and made that day one of feasting and rejoicing.

He wrote all this: "to demonstrate the basis for the custom of Jews to visit the graves of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai and his son Rabbi Eliezer who are buried in Meron, and to eat, drink and rejoice, for Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai was one of the five great disciples of Rabbi Akiva."

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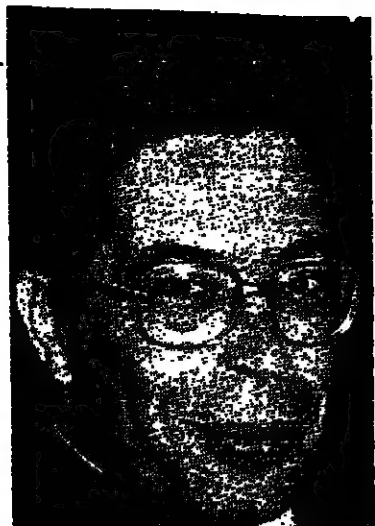
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Arye Naor reflects on the leadership qualities of Menachem Begin, the man who brought Likud to power.

TEN YEARS have passed since the Likud first came to power and long-time opposition leader Menachem Begin became Israel's sixth prime minister. It was the first time in Israeli history that a real transfer of power took place. Therefore, the change in the distribution of power resulting from those elections was far-reaching. Instead of a normal change of government, those elections are called "the political upheaval".

It is still too early to analyse the historical meaning of that upheaval. We are too close to the events to make an adequate historical judgement, and some of the processes are still developing. Nevertheless, it is clear that in a short period of time significant changes took place, partly resulting from the upheaval and partly having caused its very occurrence.

When the ballots were counted on the night of May 17, 1977, Begin described it as a turning point in the nation's history. And, indeed, it was. In the 10 years since that night, the country has known war and peace, dramatic changes in the economy, social polarization and sharp ideological divisions, as well as a change in the interpretation of the history of the national struggle which had led to the establishment of the state. This new interpretation, in turn, has had a meaningful impact on national self-consciousness and on current policy.

A detailed account of the period would be of book length. But an analysis of the relationship between policy-making and the politics of the cabinet in the first two years of the Begin administration may shed light on some consequences of the upheaval, thus leading to a better understanding of that era and its implications for recent developments.

Begin's political victory was related to domestic issues rather than to foreign affairs and security matters. On the one hand there was an increase in the Sephardi and sabra populations, both of which tended to support Begin and the Herut party. On the other hand, the corruption scandals in the years before 1977 tainted the Labour party's image. Israel was tired of what seemed to be a party ruling the country permanently, tired of the "affairs," tired of what the Likud very effectively described as the arrogance of a party which never before had faced the prospect of losing power. In short, the society was ready for a political change.

But when it came, many were surprised. Most DMC (Democratic Movement for Change) voters did not want a real upheaval with the Likud as the ruling party and Begin as prime minister. They meant to curb Labour's power and force a coalition between the old ruling party and the new DMC. When they realized what they had done, they could only watch Begin declaring victory and one of Labour's veteran leaders, Yitzhak Ben-Aharon, saying that the lights in the country had been turned off.

The sense that Labour's punishment had been exaggerated was one of the main reasons for the difficulties inside the DMC and, as a result, in the functioning of the government and the parliamentary coalition as well.

The disintegration of that new party was unavoidable, deterring others from attempting to change the system. The agreement between the Likud and the DMC to alter the electoral system was ignored. As time passed, the DMC became weaker and the Likud had no choice but to lean on the religious parties

for which a change in the system could spell disaster.

Hopes for changing the system, which would have improved government capabilities in times of crisis decision-making faded, and the government's dependence on minor political partners grew. In order to survive and carry out its programme as stated in its platform, the government had to give priority to political needs, including those of the smaller partners. And it was demonstrated that when political calculations prevail, policy considerations usually become secondary.

THIS IS not just a theoretical lesson. Politicians act politically and the politics of policy-making is always complex, consisting of interests and intentions, necessities and options. A change in the electoral system will not be feasible until one of the two main political powers have a majority in the Knesset; but once a party has that majority, it simply cannot see any necessity in changing the very system which gave it that precious power.

Is there any way out of this vicious circle? It is doubtful. But perhaps looking at Begin's conduct of the settlement policy could provide a key to a better understanding of the politics of policy-making.

Begin came to power with a systematically organized set of national goals and political priorities. He was most interested in foreign policy, national security and the future of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. He wanted to make peace, first of all with Egypt, without a restoration of foreign rule west of the Jordan River. Thus he initiated an intensive settlements policy, in spite of a strong objection from then U.S. president, Jimmy Carter, who publicly criticized that policy, saying the settlements were illegal.

In order to continue his settlements policy, Begin had to preserve his parliamentary majority. But the DMC opposed settlements and according to the coalition agreement it even could vote against them in the Knesset. At that time, in 1977-78, the Liberal faction of the Likud was more dovish than it is now and voices of dissent could also be heard from that group.

In a model political trade-off, Begin won over one of the most dovish elements in Israeli society — Agudat

Yisrael. First he assured them that he was doing everything possible to promote peace and avoid bloodshed. Then that party accepted his policy in Judea and Samaria in return for meeting its needs in terms of legislation, budgets and administrative steps.

In that case, the politics of policy-making helped the prime minister implement his ideological commitments. He used the powers of his office to achieve what he considered as the national first priority — altering the map of Jewish settlement in Eretz Yisrael.

And he succeeded. In spite of both internal and external opposition, he opened Samaria to Jewish settlers (in Judea and the Jordan valley settlements had earlier been established by Labour governments). Following his declaration in Kadum that there would be many Eilon Morehs, more than 100 settlements were built in Judea, Samaria, Gaza and the Golan Heights. This programme could be carried out because it never contradicted the vital interests of Begin's coalition partners, who were given what they wanted in return.

BUT A revised map of the West Bank was not the only change resulting from the new policies. In his victory speech on May 17, Begin also declared a commitment to make peace and invited King Hussein and presidents Sadat and Assad to negotiate peace, wherever and in whatever circumstances they would prefer.

He went to Washington and to Bucharest and sent Moshe Dayan, his foreign minister, to Teheran, Rabat and other capitals to persuade world leaders that the new Israeli government really wanted to make peace, for the sake of which he was ready even to make significant ideological concessions.

The first concession, agreed upon between Begin and Dayan, was to refrain from annexing the territories taken from the Arabs in the 1967 war. As Dayan told Carter, that was a real concession for Begin, made for the sake of peace. It also had the effect of promoting peace talks, since the obligation not to annex the territories was limited in time — as long as peace negotiations were taking place between Israel and its neighbours.

In so doing, Begin recognized that the future of the territories would



Begin: 'met the challenge of his time by innovative leadership.'

not be unilaterally determined, but rather decided upon in negotiations, aimed at the establishment of peace. In practice, this meant that the new government was not going to annex the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Begin always continued to believe that Israel had a good, valid title over that land. When he first met Carter, he solemnly declared that no renunciation could be accepted by his government since "it is our land as of right." Nevertheless, as time passed and the negotiation process developed, that right became more and more an aspiration which could not be translated into concrete, operational policy.

It was also connected with Begin's first decision as a victorious leader — to carry out the previous governments' diplomatic decisions. Thus he adopted Golda Meir's decision of

August 1970, to accept Security Council resolution 242, which had been the reason for his resignation from Meir's cabinet.

When he later realized that peace was feasible, Begin's policy became even more flexible. Following Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, Begin drew up his peace plan, advocating autonomy for the Palestinians. That idea later served as the cornerstone of the Camp David accords.

Begin's historical greatness was his ability to see the complexity of reality and draw the proper conclusions. He distinguished between realistic targets of policy and unrealistic aspirations which should be left for future generations in order to achieve as much as possible now. He met the challenge of his time by innovative leadership, unafraid of making significant changes in his

ideological framework.

When a leader has more than one goal to attain in his term in office, he has to avoid contradictions resulting from those different aims. Begin wanted peace without relinquishing our patrimony. He was not ready to give up either of these two goals, and for that purpose he proposed the autonomy plan, a concept with roots in Jabotinsky's later writing, but new to most Herut activists and Likud voters.

That was a fruitful approach, so different from what is being put forward by his political heirs. In spite of our relatively short perspective, we may anticipate that future historians will view Begin's innovative approach in the course of peace negotiations with Egypt as his main contribution to the nation and the politics of policy-making.

ISRAEL AND India became independent states at almost the same time. Yet, notwithstanding that the earliest political leaders of both shared similar democratic and socialist views, Indo-Israeli relations have been, to say the least, abnormal. Instead of an exchange of ambassadors and full mutual diplomatic recognition as originally envisaged, India restricted Israel representation on its territory to a consulate in Bombay, limited in its mandate to the state of Maharashtra. For their part, the Indians offered no diplomatic or even consular mission in Israel. Instead, they requested Britain to charge its embassy in Tel Aviv to deal with Indian affairs.

Today, even the consulate has been downgraded, and is now headed by a vice-consul.

Apart from such obvious reasons as India's "submission" to Arab and Soviet anti-Israel pressures, there can be little doubt that early ideological confusion and hostility regarding Zionism also played a substantial role in determining subsequent diplomatic relations leading to the present impasse. Today, these relations are at their lowest ebb.

The rejection of Zionism by India's modern leaders predated the establishment of Israel. It was not only Gandhi and Nehru who were influenced by the British Fabians, and saw the Muslim-led uprising of the Palestinian Arabs in the 1930s as a "progressive anti-imperialist" phenomenon; Krishna Menon, who was later to become free India's foreign minister, also made little effort to conceal his bias. Observers attributed his notorious anti-Semitism to his unsuccessful bid against a Zionist candidate to become the MP for Whitechapel in the 1920s. Menon's enmity towards Israel coloured his entire political and diplomatic career.

No serious study of Indo-Israeli relations can ignore a certain racist undercurrent, nor can it be unaware of a pervasive self-righteous hypocrisy among its ranking politicians and diplomats. At times, it is a type of white-skinned racism in brown-skinned reverence. Of course, the Indian Constitution is vigorously against racism, but Indian society is riddled with it in many forms, ranging from ethnic conflicts to antagonism between castes.

The newcomer to India is aware of this at an absurd level. The cook will not remove the refuse, the driver carry a parcel from the car; there are elevators for tenants only — if there is none for employees, they must climb the stairs. Everything goes according to caste, advertisements in Sunday papers inserted by men seeking

brides put "fair-skin" at the highest premium.

I encountered a curious blend of such racism and hostility on the part of a high-ranking civil servant during my posting as Israel consul in Bombay in the late 1960s. It led to a rather heated argument during a afternoon tea at the home of a prominent Bombay trade-union leader. Among the guests were an Indian representative at the International Labour Office and his wife. His accent was a cultured "Oxbridge" — until our argument began.

In a discussion on World War II, he revealed his great admiration for Subhas Chandra Bose, an Indian leftist who had spent his war years in Japan exhorting, via radio, a social and anti-imperialist revolution of the Indian masses against their British oppressors. When I asked him whether a victorious Japan might have been an even more tyrannical imperialism, the explosion occurred. "In the end, we'll get you whites," he thundered. "Who are the Chinese?" I asked. "We and the Chinese," he replied. Later, my host commented, "You know, his wife is Jewish and she's much more intelligent than he is. This, I think, is the root of his anti-Semitism."

However, it must be said in all fairness that the hostile and biased attitude of certain members of the Indian hierarchy was far from representative of that of the Indian people. It was rightly proud of the fact that in the long history of the Jews in that country there have never been outbreaks of pogroms or anti-Semitism against them. But the vast majority of the Jews of India were the brown-skinned, impoverished Bnei Israel who were considered a "caste" but not a separate national entity until they started immigrating to Israel. Most of the rich Iraqi Jews who were identified with the British overlords left India after it achieved independence in 1947 for countries other than Israel.

The idea of the Jews as a national entity, as a separate people as distinct from a religious sect, was alien to the leaders of India's national independence movement. Mahatma Gandhi in particular, in an exchange of views with Martin Buber, proclaimed outright that Polish Jews were Poles, French Jews were French, German Jews were German, notwithstanding what had begun to happen to them at the hands of the Nazis, or earlier in Czarist Russia, Poland and elsewhere.

THERE WAS, however, a momentary historical pause in the hostility of India's socialist and anti-colonialist leadership towards Zionism in the second half of the 1940s.

India and Israel

An exercise in frustration

Ya'akov Morris

Not even distant India could remain immune to the universal impact of the Holocaust; nor could its leadership entirely ignore the pro-Nazi position of the leaders of Palestinian and other Arab nationalisms during World War II. Moreover, the Jewish and Zionist struggle for independent statehood against British imperialism coincided with that of the Indian national movement against the same colonial power.

Ultimately, at the United Nations, India favoured a federal solution of the Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine and opposed the partitioning of the country into separate states; but it could not have failed to be impressed by the majority stand of the General Assembly and, in particular, Soviet support for the establishment of a Jewish state. As a result, when early diplomatic contacts were established by new-born Israel with the newly independent Indian state, agreement was reached with Prime Minister Nehru that each country would establish an embassy in the other's capital city.

The diplomatic "honeymoon," however, was to be short-lived. Nehru equivocated and reneged on his undertaking. Apart from traditional ideological inhibitions about Zionism, Arab nationalists — both Palestinian and of the Arab states — had declared war on the Jewish state at birth.

Instead of a Palestine Arab state arising as a result of the UN partition decision, most of its designated territory had been occupied by Jordan and Egypt, and most of its people had become a massive refugee problem. The Indians ignored the fact that the partitioning of their own sub-continent had resulted, to a much greater degree, in the large scale movement and resettlement of refugees.

There was, however, a difference. While India and Pakistan, as a result of partition, had set about absorbing the Hindu and Moslem refugees in their respective states, only Israel had accepted as its citizens the Jewish refugees from the Arab world. The Arabs, on their part, had refused to resettle the Palestinian re-

fugees in their respective states, or even in the area of Palestine which Jordan had overrun, and were insisting on their unconditional return to the areas of Palestine they had abandoned.

REGARDLESS of the rights and wrongs of the problem, and of the fact that the Jewish and Palestine Arab refugee problems were the result of an Arab war against the UN resolution and the Jewish state, India was to be strongly influenced by considerations of a most subjective character. It was still involved in conflicts with its Pakistan neighbour over, for example, Kashmir. It feared the support of the Arab states for Pakistan on this issue in the UN, not to mention the considerable Moslem minority at home. And although Israel supported India at the world organization on the Kashmir issue, its weight obviously counted far less than the cumulative votes of the Arab states.

Furthermore, in addition to the greater political clout of the Arab states even at this early stage, India's leaders no doubt anticipated that the populous Arab countries represented a much more extensive future trade potential than tiny Israel. In short, instead of normal relations with the Arabs and with Israel, India submitted to the Arab blackmail early in its diplomatic relations.

How much these ideological and pragmatic elements — identification with the Palestinian Arab "victim" of imperialism or white "racism" — combined with this blackmail to modify what were originally to be normal relations between India and Israel may be left to the historians.

In practical terms, India retreated from a promised exchange of full diplomatic relations with Israel to an extremely limited alternative. Israel was given permission to open a consulate in the major city of the state of Maharashtra, namely, Bombay, with rights restricted to that state. India on its part refrained from opening any representation whatsoever in Israel. The arrangement whereby the British Embassy in Tel Aviv looked after its interest ended two years ago.

Israel swallowed its pride and settled for much less. Its leaders,

however, were deeply disappointed. As social democrats they had long felt strong ideological and emotional affinities with the Indian national movement and to them, Gandhi and Nehru had been hero figures. India, they had believed, would be one of Israel's most early and natural friends. They had not anticipated the cynicism of realism.

Within India, however, there was a great deal of sympathy for the Jewish people and Israel among the dominantly numerous Hindu population. This sympathy was — and still is — compounded of two elements.

On the one hand, a positive appreciation existed of Israel's valiant fight for independence against what appeared to be insurmountable odds, as well as of the pioneer battle of its founders against swamp and aridity. On the other hand, ever since the despotic Islamic rule of the Moguls and, more lately, the conflict with the Moslems that led to partition and the establishment of Pakistan, a deep antipathy towards the Islamic world existed among the Hindu masses. Because of this, many identified with Israel in its struggle for survival against the Arab states. The Sikhs, too, whose martial tradition and successful "green revolution" in Punjab are famed in India, have shown special admiration for Israel.

NEVERTHELESS, public sentiment in no way influenced India's policy-making to question their increasingly pro-Arab and critical line in relation to Israel. By the late '50s, Prime Minister Nehru had established close ties of friendship and orientation with President Tito of Yugoslavia, Nasser of Egypt, and Sukarno of Indonesia. This had become manifest in the establishment of the Neutralist bloc at the Bandung Conference. Arab opposition had been decisive in excluding Israel from participating in this, although it must be admitted that Nehru, despite the opposition of his foreign minister, Menon, had supported it.

Israel, whose foreign policy directed by Moshe Sharett had initially attempted to follow a course of non-alignment vis-à-vis the major powers, now faced in its first decade (in addition to the Soviet Union switch to support for a pro-Arab policy) this new Neutralist bloc, later to be aptly described by Jon Kimche as "neutralite" — that is, "one part neutral and nine parts (Soviet) satellite."

India, because of its special relationship to the Arabs, and its growing reasons for dependence on the Soviet Union, assumed a foreign policy of ever-increasing hostility towards Israel.

India's Soviet connection had developed as a result of conflict with

both Pakistani and Chinese territory; over Kashmir, on the one hand, and over the northern area of Ladakh on the other.

Because of border clashes in these areas, which in 1962 and 1965, respectively, had assumed the proportions of large-scale wars, India began to look upon the Soviet Union as its military shield. More and more, its armed forces, land, sea and air, were equipped with, and depended on Russian weapons. And, besides arms, the volume of trade between the two countries tripled within five years.

The Soviet and Indian foreign policies towards the Middle East became synonymous in their support for the Arab side in the Middle East wars of 1956, 1967 and 1973 and — in between them — in the political struggle at the UN and its agencies.

This support was not merely political as expressed by India's repeated initiatives in favouring, and even formulating, condemnatory resolutions against Israel at the world organization. India's shipyards at Bombay became a major centre for the refitting and repairing of Egyptian naval vessels; its factories became a source of supply of locally manufactured landing-craft (fitted with British Perkins diesel engines) for that country's navy.

What was inexplicable, however, was why India did not submit to the pressure of her Third World and Neutralist colleagues to close down the Israel Consulate in Bombay in line with the closing of other Israeli diplomatic missions during and after the 1967 war.

There are, of course, various explanations, including Indira Gandhi's desire to maintain some appearance of "neutrality" in her relations with the United States and the Soviet Union and, at the same time, some "counter-balance" to increasing and strident Arab pressure.

Whatever the reasons, the Israel Consulate in Bombay remained open, although its activities from 1970 onwards were increasingly restricted. Until then, although its mandate had been defined as operations in the state of Maharashtra only, staff information and public relations activities in New Delhi and elsewhere had not been opposed. However, Israel was forbidden to celebrate its Independence Day in the capital or to conduct official activities there.

As Israel's consul, having frequent business in New Delhi, which included meetings with MPs and officials of the External Affairs Ministry and other government departments, I was compelled to stay in hotels. It was made clear to me that to rent an apartment there would be to give Israel official standing in India's capital.

An Indian minister who intimated

to the prime minister that he was interested in visiting Israel soon met with a blunt refusal from Indira Gandhi. Other high officials were even afraid to ask her permission. However, visits without visas by Israelis were still permitted then, while many Indians — apart from officials — travelled to Israel.

SINCE 1970 India's relationship with Israel has deteriorated even more, while Arab influence has increased. The PLO has been given full diplomatic status and enjoys complete freedom of activity, including organizing cells among the Moslem population, and raising funds for its activities.

The Israel Consulate, on the other hand, could no longer engage in any activity outside Maharashtra, and a consul who publicly expressed the mildest of criticism against India's Middle East policy, was expelled. Since then the Indian government has refused to permit a replacement.

This has obviously restricted any hope of an expanded status on the part of the Consulate. Moreover, Israelis are no longer permitted to enter India without a visa and lately these have sometimes been refused.

The public's attention was first drawn to this when an Israeli table tennis team sought to participate in an international competition in India and was refused entry visas. Now the same problem has arisen in the case of the Davis Cup tennis tournament, as Israel was scheduled to play the Indian national team on Indian territory. So far, no visas have been issued.

After India's long record of hostility to Israel in international forums, and the discriminatory restrictions that have limited normal diplomatic relations and activities, not a few Israelis today question whether their government should continue to maintain its consulate in Bombay. For years it has been an investment which has paid no dividends but has incurred a progressive loss.

The question is even more relevant in the light of reduced Foreign Ministry budgets which have resulted in the reduction of missions in countries far more important to Israel than India.

To date, Israel has never voluntarily withdrawn its diplomatic representation from any country for political reasons but has at all times chosen — in the face of diplomatic adversity on the part of the host country — to turn the other cheek. Perhaps this can be justified by the attitude that it is better to have some foothold, however tenuous, than none. It is an approach, however, that upsets national pride and self-respect.

The writer is a veteran diplomat.

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Celluloid jungle

The "Golden Palm" award is displayed at the Festival Palace. (AFP)



A celebrated French chef, Roger Verger, owner of a restaurant near Cannes, gives John Travolta a taste of French foie gras. (AFP)



French actress Jeanne Moreau aboard the boat used in Roman Polanski's "Pirates." (AFP)

CANNES MUST be one of the seven wonders of the world—and not the least of them either. Looking at this fancy, elegant, extremely expensive Riviera resort for the very rich, you can't imagine how it could accommodate 40,000 people at one time, all in a state of high anxiety who stay for a whole fortnight, without completely wrecking the town.

Seeing it once, you are convinced that every inch of space is taken up and that more activities are impossible. But, as I have said, being one of the seven wonders of the world, Cannes keeps expanding each festival as if there were no limits to its flexibility.

This year, it once again outdid itself. There were some objective reasons, like the 40th anniversary of the festival, which promised a special programme. In addition, the first day was a national holiday (the French celebrate the end of WWII on May 8), allowing all the aficionados to gather on the *croisette*, rub elbows on the beaches and hope for a glimpse of their favourite stars.

The young ladies tan themselves "au naturel" and you sometimes fear they might catch a chest cold in the cool breeze. The restaurants, along

with the *croisette*, are filling up, in spite of prices that have very little to do with the quality of the food served. And the stars are everywhere, for when there are so many photographers around, and so many chances of getting free publicity they can't seem to resist the temptation.

In the hotels, millions change hands in deals that sometimes materialize and sometimes don't; posters are hung for films that haven't yet been written; John Voight is flown in to tell potential investors how enthusiastic he is about his next film and to invite them to put their money in it; John Travolta is doing the same for his next movie; Robert de Niro drops in for the opening night.

Name droppers could go on forever. After all, there are half a dozen publications being printed daily with festival news, telling you that Menahem Golan has signed Meryl Streep for a picture, or that *Rambo III* may be made in Israel if Morocco is not cheaper and so on.

Distributors, hungry for films that will make them a fortune, watch each other like hawks, often bidding madly, to make sure the competition won't get its hands on a choice morsel, which may well turn out to

be a dud once you look at it away from the lights of Cannes.

IN SHORT, it is a jungle, and everybody here feels free to act accordingly for the duration—particularly the film critics, who have made this event the focus of the cinematic year. Hundreds of reviews are coming out of Cannes every day of the

may be partly to blame for his disappointment. Every year he believes, naively, that something special is in store for him, and he forgets that a festival screening close to 1,000 films in 13 days, can't possibly offer a high percentage of great films.

One could observe this from the very first evening, when a modest

entitled to expect a masterpiece from Rosi, one of the leading directors of our time. What they got was a co-production with actors from different countries, including Rupert Everett, Ornella Muti, Irene Papas and Gian Maria Volonte, who ignored each other, playing only for the benefit of the camera. After going to all the trouble to shoot the film in Colombia, out of respect for Marquez, Rosi changed the ending making one of the characters British. The plot, concerned with the guilt of an entire village which doesn't lift a finger to prevent a murder, when taken out of the context of Marquez's prose, is very much like a Latin melodrama. It stays on that level for most of the film.

BUT WHY go on about disappointments? They are too many to count, and too unpleasant to mention. There were some pleasant experiences as well. For instance, the madcap film farce entitled *Raising Arizona* made by the Coen brothers. Joel (32) and Ethan (29) have produced one cult item. *Blood Simple* which became a minor sensation, sufficient to get them money from a major company (Fox) to make another.

Raising Arizona is about a former convict who marries a diminutive policewoman. When they discover they can't have children, they steal one from a couple which has just had quintuplets. But the plot is irrelevant. The fun is in treating all kinds of classical Hollywood genres in an irreverent fashion, be it the bike generation, the special effects syndrome, or prison gang yarns. It may not be a classic, but the public enjoyed it immensely and 23-year-old Nicholas Cage, who plays the lead, was the favourite star of the opening week.

The film, which will probably be most popular with everybody, public and critics alike, is *Black Eyes*, a beautiful love story shot by Russian actor-director Nikita Mikhalkov in Italy, and based on several Chekhov novels. With much sensitivity and humour, Mikhalkov describes how a lazy, philandering Italian architect falls in love with a married Russian woman he meets in a Felliniesque spa, and how this love story proceeds through the Russian steppes, concluding on a pleasure boat. Beautifully shot, very well acted by Marcello Mastroianni in the lead, with Silvana Mangano and Mikhalkov himself supplying great cameos, this movie sweeps you off your feet. You may be a bit worried about Chekhov, who sometimes gets lost in the spectacle, but it isn't really so bad, because the spirit is there.

The most discussed film in the festival up to now is Peter Greenaway's *Belly of an Architect*. Greenaway well known after *The Draughtsman's Contract* as an elegant designer of complex riddles, offers another one of his puzzles, this time about an American architect who goes to Rome to prepare an exhibition dedicated to the work of Bramante, a Frenchman who lived in the 18th century and whose theories on architecture he considers revolutionary. The American's infatuation with his subject is such that he forgets everything else, including his marriage, his health and his other obligations. This is a film about the bareness of creativity, about people who talk about creating so much that they are too busy to do anything about it themselves. It is about man's desperate aspiration to leave behind a trace of his existence in this world, and finally settling for having a baby.

Beautiful to look at, cleverly put together, the movie has been accused of being too cold and calculated by some, and praised as being

profound and challenging by others. In any case, everyone agrees it was one of the very few films one could discuss this year for more than five minutes without falling asleep.

THEN THERE was a film from China, entitled *Xiao Qiao*, about a girl who is married off to a baby boy and goes to live with the boy's family. But she can't help herself and commits adultery with a boy her own age. The film is most ethnographical in character, elaborating on primitive traditions. But visually it is breathtaking, thanks to the incredible landscape chosen as background, and there is an urgency about it, an earnest dynamism which was lacking in other Chinese films I have seen.

In contrast, a movie from Norway, *The Wild One*, offers the feminist comment of this year, describing the miseries of a girl who is raped by her adoptive father and becomes the victim of male chauvinism and bigotry. Terribly slow and determined to make its point to the bitter end, the film makes no concession at all to public fancy, ending on a despairing note, in which only a very faint hope still glimmers.

Whether the British cinema is more prosperous than it has been in the past few years is questionable, if one looks at the figures, but thanks to the active support of television, films get produced there in quantity, and also in quality. David Leland, a colourful character and an actor, writer and director with rich TV background, has made his first film for the cinema, *Wish You Were Here*. It deals with youth in England, the subject of his TV work, but this time with a lot of verve and humour.

The film is about a 16-year-old girl who needs a bit of affection but doesn't get it from her father. She declares her private war on morality and society in a determined, funny and vivacious manner. There are many sad, depressing moments in this story, but its upbeat ending shows a confidence in the energy and purposefulness of the young generation that is uplifting.

The festival offered an African version of mystical pilgrimages in *Enlightenment* from Mali, and *The Immaculate Way* from Japan. There was a film from the USSR, *Letters From a Dead Man*, a post-Chernobyl prophecy about the end of the world, or what happens immediately after somebody pushes the famous button by mistake.

There is more to come, but more about this next week.

Dan Fainaru at Cannes

festival, going to every corner of the world, and each reviewer feels compelled to be smarter, sharper and tougher than the others.

Everyone also expects to be shown only the greatest films in the world. After all, why take the trouble to come to Cannes for anything less than that? Thus, every time they discover that there aren't many great films and that not every festival selection is memorable or even mentionable, they vent their frustrations in torrents of invective directed at those who have disappointed them.

A colleague who was particularly vociferous one evening conceded, after he took a deep breath, that he

little love story by Diane Kurys, a nice Jewish girl who has even spent some time on a kibbutz, was expected to fulfil the expectations of an opening night. Kurys may do cute little movies, as she did in the past (*Diabolo Mente*, *Entre Nous*), but she is no great film maker and *A Man In Love*, the romance between a film star and a fledgling starlet with Roman tourist sites as the background, was far too weak an item for such a prestigious evening.

One film which took an even grander beating than did Kurys was *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, the Francesco Rosi adaptation of a Gabriel Marquez story. Everyone felt

Michael Dak attends the Luxor revival of Verdi's opera

Aida returns in splendour

IN THE MOSQUES of Luxor, believers lay sleeping on straw mats, seeking a respite from the Ramadan midday heat. Everyone was trying to leave as little body surface as possible at the mercy of the east wind. Everyone, that is, except the foreign

tourists, dubbed by the locals *Opera aida*, who had come for the marionette production of Verdi's *Aida*. They had no time to lose, no sites to skip, no bargain to miss while waiting for the evening's spectacle.

One after another the planes

touched down on the specially-adapted Concorde-compatible airstrip. Every landing was greeted by a band of Nubians playing Arab flutes and drums and strings, sounding like an oriental *perpetuum mobile*. For the moment, Verdi became irrelevant, as the disembarking opera buffs, swaying to the musical arabesques, discarded Europe for a while and merged into the desert scene. The transition was not difficult: at 45 degrees Centigrade, any resistance would melt.

For 10 days, Luxor, the capital of ancient Thebes, opened its gates to the lovers of opera; the rich, the influential who had been invited; or those who believed they were influential and could afford to pay prices ranging from \$275 to \$800; and above all, to those who cannot resist the temptation of "being there" when something is going on.

THE INITIATOR of the project was Egyptian-born Austrian businessman Fawzi Metwalli. In an interview in the lobby of the Winter Palace, one of the most elegant of the hotels when Luxor was at its 19th-century peak as a focus for foreign travel, he said, "Aida has been away from Egypt for a long while, and it is time for her to return home."

But he did not regret only the absence of the opera; he also talked about Egypt's archeological treasures scattered about the world, especially the huge obelisk, one of the pair of masterpieces that once guarded the gates of the temple of Luxor, which was removed "temporarily" by Napoleon III for exhibition in Paris and is still circled by the thousands of cars driving around the Place de la Concorde.

Metwalli said he had invested something like \$10 million in the project, but with some 30,000 visitors for 10 performances, the expense would be covered. Egyptian critics were complaining that not enough of the money would remain in the country, but, he said, "first of all, I pay taxes. And besides, the increase in tourism is evident and will last for the name Egypt and Luxor have been carried round the world by the media."

IN THE SOUK just a block away, things are beginning to come alive with the evening breeze. And Mohammed is preparing noodles for *canaille*. The Ramadan fast will soon be over until tomorrow's dawn. Mohammed knows I am from Israel, and greets me as heartily as any Israeli is greeted in Egypt. "Opera aida don't come here," he says with a smile. "They go from the hotel along the corniche to the fancy restaurants, back to the hotel, and then to the airport. Nothing for us. Aida belongs to the corniche."

Along the corniche, the entrance to the temple has been turned into an arena with a multi-level stage. Our Nubian usher shows more interest in one of the horses on which the opera's guard wait to make their entrance than in helping us to find our seats.

Maria Chiara, tonight's Aida, is wonderful. She admits, during an



intermission, when singers, orchestra and spectators mingle at the temple gates, that it is extremely hard to sing outdoors, in the terrible heat and dust.

"I deprive myself of the air conditioner, the swimming pool, the daily visit to the souk, to be in good shape for the night. But for me, this is all fully compensated for by the magnificent feeling of singing here, at the place where it all happened. And besides, don't you find this a *spetacolo grandioso*?"

Radames, the commander of the guard, is played tonight by Giorgio Lamberti. His voice breaks at the end of his first aria. But after all, Placido Domingo sang Radames on the opening night, and he didn't make such a great impression either. Besides, as a journalist I am going to

have another chance of witnessing the grandiose spectacle tomorrow, as the guest of the Egyptian Information Service.

This time there is a magnificent Radames. Giuliano Cianella.

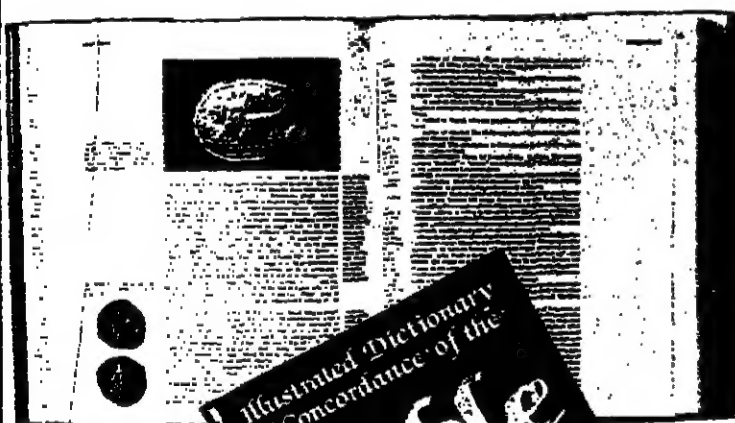
VERDI HIMSELF would probably not have attended the Luxor spectacle. He detested such events and besides he was terrified that the Egyptians would mummify him at the premiere of *Aida*. He wrote this in a letter to Filippo Filippi, music critic of the *Gazzetta musicale* and added:

"It seems to me that art in that way is no longer art, but a business, a hunt, something that must be chased after, which must be given if not success, at least notoriety at any cost! My reaction to this is that of

disgust, of humiliation! Now what an apparatus for an opera! Journalists, artists, choristers, conductors, players, etc., etc. Each must add his own stone to the edifice of publicity, in order to create a framework for small trifles that add nothing to the worth of an opera. In fact, they obscure its real value."

Everyone had something to gain from the spectacle in Luxor. Metwalli gained entrance to the world of opera and stars, as Onassis did in his time, and made some money too. Egypt benefited from the worldwide publicity attaching to the production. Upper Egypt came on the scene as an extremely attractive tourist target. My group-companion Pincas Javets, consultant on desert and energy development, called it "optimum use of comparative advantage."

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A political marriage on the rocks

PUBLIC FACES / Mark Segal



Yitzhak Shamir



Yasser Arafat

THIS WEEK'S meetings of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likudniks and Deputy Premier Shimon Peres's Labourites reminded some observers of people pulled back from teetering on the brink of a chasm. Right now it looks as if coalition executive chairman Rafi Eder will have to wait a while for his forecast of "the children (of Israel) having to choose between papa (Labour) and mama (Likud)" to materialize. We've known worse marriages to survive for years.

The transatlantic procession to Washington of top people from both sides of our national (dis)unity government, from Peres and his political advisor Nimrod Novick to Shamir's close ally Minister-without-Portfolio Moshe Arens and his director-general Yossi Ben-Aharon makes one wonder whether they're treating U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz as a marriage counsellor or as a divorce lawyer?

There are those who consider that Shamir's anti-Peres outburst was largely for Shultz's ears in advance of the vice-premier's meeting with him. Others wonder whether Shamir's extremism was inspired by all those rumours about industry and Trade Minister Ariel Sharon conjuring up some magical compromises. Shamir's people say it's just that Peres misjudged their boss's capacity for stubbornness.

Likudniks may cry that Peres's international conference formula will only benefit King Hussein. So far the beneficiaries of the crisis have been Tami's Ashraf Abuhazzeira, who's assured a Likud seat in the next Knesset, and Shas's Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz, who's poised to resume his cabinet seat.

WHETHER THE government indeed becomes one of national paralysis remains to be seen. What is feared is that it will continue to be the most leaking government ever. The Likud blames Peres's people for the leak of Shultz's latest message, after U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering stressed to Shamir that it was a classified "government-to-government communication." Now we hear Labour Accusing Shamir's top aide, Yossi Ben-Aharon, of leaking King Hussein's agreement to *The New York Times*.

IT SEEMS the government's paralysis means it still won't be able to choose a successor to outgoing Ambassador to Washington Meir Rosenfeld, despite two new names floated this week: IDF Coordinator in Lebanon Uri Lubrani and Dayan Centre chairman Prof. Itamar Rabinovich.

PERES COULDN'T have got much comfort from hearing both Economics and Planning Minister Gad Ya'acobi and Knesset Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Abba Eban warn that peace initiatives and elections cannot co-exist. Eban said, "Only the Almighty could find a formula to bring Shamir and Arens to the peace conference table."

EDUCATION MINISTER Yitzhak Navon was upset when Shamir again put off the decision on students' tuition at this week's cabinet meeting because of the absence of Finance Minister Moshe Nissim and his

stand-in Science Minister Gideon Pat, who's gone abroad. When someone asked "Where to?" Navon quipped: "Maybe to join in 'The Idiots' Song' at the Eurovision contest."

FORMER COGS' Rafael (Rafal) Eitan's claim that his order to tap senior officers' phones was authorized by a defence minister brought Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin to reassure the Cabinet that he has not and would never approve of this practice. That prompted his two predecessors, Ariel Sharon and Moshe Arens to deny ever having given their consent to it, with Ya'acobi, who was also present, remarking jocularly: "I wish to go on record that I never gave the order." So for lack of Rafal's retraction, does that leave us with Menachem Begin?

BELGIAN FOREIGN Minister Leo Tindemans heard both sides of our great debate, with Shamir saying Israel wants to copy the Europeans in having a Middle East Community, but - like them - without Russian and Chinese help. The Belgian leader got on well with Peres, relating that during his visits to Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan, one Arab leader told him: "Today, the slogan should be make war, not love - it's safer!"

IT WAS inevitable that Sunday's annual New York Solidarity with Israel parade along 5th Avenue should also reflect our great national division - Peres will be guest of honour on the grandstand along with Housing Minister David Levy.

Peres will also spend time in Pittsburgh at a Carnegie-Mellon Institute seminar on computers, artificial intelligence and robotics, along with senior academicians like Israel Scientific Centre head Prof. David Chen. It follows the private visit here three weeks ago of Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber to interest Peres in setting up an Israeli centre to have an on-line link with U.S. and international data banks. And I thought we had more than enough artificial intelligence already.

WHEN AMERICAN TV star Neil Carter espied Abba Eban chatting in the Tel Aviv Dan Hotel lobby with Knesset Speaker Shimon Harel, she gushed all over him: "Your Heritage series is even more popular than my shows!" Peres's bad-tempered attack on Eban, over his Pollard enquiry, dismissing him as "a pompous peacock," has reputedly brought our wittiest MK to remark that "we may soon have a new

species - a peacock with a sting in its tail." IT MAY HAVE been a slip-up in seating arrangements at the Beit Hanassi dinner in honour of the Grand Duke Jean and the Grand Duchess Josephine-Charlotte of Luxembourg, that such old non-friends as Rabin and Eban were placed at the same table. But go one need have worried, like everyone else there they enjoyed the kind of highly civilized evening that President Chaim Herzog and First Lady Aara know how to arrange, ending with enchanting chamber music. The King David Hotel catering service showed it knows how to entertain royally. The grand duke captivated his audience with his sincere friendship for Israel and the Jewish people, with President Herzog paying tribute to Luxembourg's enduring support, noting "You have shown that smallness is not a disadvantage in a world dominated by big powers."

MEXICO ENERGY Minister Alfredo del Mazo has been given a stylish welcome by our Energy Minister Moshe Shalek, and met our top people. That's all to the good, for I'm told he's tipped as a likely successor to Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid.

THIS WEEK, Sotheby's Israel branch will be giving a private showing of their art auction here - set for

At the high table, alongside the two heads of state and their wives, were Knesset Speaker Harel and Justice Meir Shamgar, president of the Supreme Court. Other guests included Ministers Avraham Shari, Haim Bar-Lev and their wives, Ezer Weizman - who kept showing everyone his place card, on which was inscribed "Minister Chaim Weizmann" - and Sheikh Tewfik Assa-Nya, chairman of the Beduin village Bosmat Tiv'on.

On the morrow, the President took the grand duke, his old comrade-in-arms in the same British army unit that helped liberate Europe, on a guided tour of Jerusalem's battle fields. Later, he also accompanied him on his tours of Acre and Caesaria.

The royal guests were pleased with their visit to Beth Hatefutsoth at Tel Aviv University, where the grand duke studied the computer print out on Luxembourg's Jewish community. The royal presence added a nice touch to the Diaspora Museum's ninth anniversary, marked by the lecture of international museum expert Kenneth Hudson on his book *Museums of Influence*, wherein he singled out the Diaspora Museum as one of the 37 best museums in the world.

THE SHEBA Medical Centre's clinic treating 200 children suffering from cystic fibrosis was given a reprieve when Marjorie Sherman, widow of philanthropist Archie, of Britain, gave them a cheque for £20,000 on hearing of its impending closure for lack of government funds. She heard of its plight from her friend Esther Rubin who had just come from the testimonial breakfast at the Tel Aviv Hilton Hotel honouring actor-singer Mike Burstyn by the Israel Cystic Fibrosis Association chaired by Michael Spiegel which launched their fundraising drive.

WAS IT consistent of World Jewish Congress President Edgar Bronfman and his executive's members to have gone ahead with their Budapest confab, when a week earlier, Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Varkonyi went specially to Vienna to issue an official invitation to Austrian President Kurt Waldheim? Not to mention MK Dr. Yosef Burg's two hours' demeaning wait at Budapest airport.

Have you heard this one: "O. What do you call the disease of old Nazis who forget their pasts?" A. Waldheim's."

May 24 - at the Jerusalem Hilton Hotel, offering Marc Chagall's oil painting *Flowers* at half a million dollars, plus works by Matisse, Klee, Chaim Soutine, Chana Orloff and Reuven Rubin. Rare pieces of Judaica will be on offer, topped by the first Hebrew manuscript (Sforim 1551) to mention the discovery of America. Viewers will see dynamic Melanie Clore, 27, Sotheby's youngest woman auctioneer, in action. An expert on Impressionist paintings, she is the great niece of the late Sir Charles Clore.

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Sexism and misanthropy

TELEREVIEW / Philip Gillon

DISPLAYING my usual nobility, I hasten to point out, to do justice to the readers who accused me in Monday's *Jerusalem Post* of being a sexist and bigot because of my attitude to a certain woman, that they wrote those letters before she launched her pogrom in Kalkilya and her commando raid on the Peace Now demonstration. (Before I get more letters, I must stress that the word "pogrom" was not coined by me, but was used by Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin to describe the attack on the Arabs.)

On the late news one night, we heard poor Hanan Porat of Gush Etzion pouring out his heart about the sufferings of that fiery female's opponents in their movement. According to Porat, she has invented a simple way of disposing of adverse comments on her leadership - she just refuses to call a meeting where her critics can voice their complaints and propose that she be sacked. If they insist on going on with their efforts to oust her from office, I suspect that she will let loose her Cossacks on them.

Which brings me back to those letter-writers accusing me of being a sexist and a bigot because I refuse to allow that name to pass across my wordprocessor, lest the sensitive machine react by going on strike and refusing to play genie for me any longer. Wordprocessors are creatures of principle, just like the Kokonuts in Television House.

Actually, my adverse letter-writers misunderstood my reply to Professor Alice Shalvi: what I wrote was that, had I been a woman, I would have been ashamed of belong-

ing to the same sex as the virago, and would not have gone public about it. I don't see anything sexist or bigoted about that. But now, after the Kalkilya and Peace Now raids, I go further. I am ashamed of belonging to the same nation, the same people and the same human race as the person in question.

She reminds me of the Brodsky-nagian's observation to Gulliver that human beings are the most odious race of little vermin ever to infect the face of the earth. Does my desire not to be identified in any way with her make me an anti-Israeli, an anti-Semitic and a misanthrope? There are Israelis, Jews and human beings, of both sexes, with whom both I and my wordprocessor will be proud to be associated.

If my critics are right, I can only say that I would rather be accused of being sexist for failing to give that female of the species a name than be accused of being a racist, a chauvinist, an xenophobe and a fascist because I treat her with respect. I do not approve of the principle, "My country, right or wrong" - I beg feminists not to fall into the trap of "My sex, right or wrong."

Further to Professor Shalvi's claim, and that of the letter-writers, that failure to use names is a proof of sexual bias, I recall that David Ben Gurion, when he was prime minister, never referred to Menachem Begin by name, or even by his title as leader of the opposition. The Old Man always called his opponent "that man." Was this an indication

of some form of sexual bias on the part of B-G?

To set the record straight, I must assert loud, strong and clear that I love, adore, respect and esteem Woman and women, and think that almost all of them are wonderful, and I am delighted that they are taking over the world from incompetent men. If male readers of this column think that this attitude makes me sexist and bigoted, let them think so. They can put it in their pipes and smoke it.

But to every rule, like that of my worship of Woman, there must be at least one exception....

THE EUROVISION contest this year was a frost, not only because the best song, Israel's, did not win it, as we should have if it had not been for anti-Semitism again, but because the Belgian and other organizers made such a hash of what should be a heartwarming event.

Their abstract setting was cold and repellent, suitable perhaps for Hamlet meeting the ghost on the ramparts of Elsinore, but hardly conducive to the kind of lovingkindness that the contest is supposed to generate. Then the austere black and white masculine clothes worn by most of the women were abominable - I like my women to look like women. Oh dear, I hope that this attitude is not *verboten*, and that I won't be accused again of letting sexism sneak into my judgments.

Then, for some reason, the Belgian woman announcer never told us long, strong and clear the countries

of the singers: we had to guess these from the flags and the languages used. This was OK in the case of Datar and Kushnir, or where the language used was English, but a whole slew of competitors had me guessing where they came from.

This whole business of the language is idiotic. For some reason, Eurovision decided some years ago that everybody had to use her (or his) national tongue. This rule is far enough for people who happen to talk English or French, but it handicaps Slavs, Greeks, Scandinavians and Israelis. Surely an indispensable part of one's appreciation of any song is the ability to understand the words?

Presumably the juries have translations of the words of all the songs at their disposal, but the 500 million devoted viewers out there on the far frontiers of television land do not, so all the songs tend to merge into noises very like each other.

Actually, since the words of every song are known well in advance, there is no reason why the station of every country should not do some homework, and insert translations as sub-titles. If we had had Hebrew sub-titles, we might have enjoyed all the songs much more.

Mind you, understanding the words can prove to be counter-productive, if I may use some public relations jargon. For instance, take the winning Irish song, "Hold Me Now." The words were really idiotic. Johnny Logan sang them with such feeling and pathos that I suppose he appealed to the juries. I think what really won him the contest was his lovely white attire, compared to the mourning garb worn by

most of his competitors.

Our boys were terrific. If anything, they had over-rehearsed - their dancing and singing were so perfect that they seemed to have lost some of the gusto and spontaneity that they brought to their first appearance. Perhaps they made the mistake of starting to take the contest seriously instead of as a joke, as they treated it in Israel.

RIVKA Michaeli's *Party Time* brought us one of the most interesting interviews I can remember - Yoram Binur of the Jerusalem weekly, *Kol Ha-Ir*. He speaks Arabic fluently, and for three months he lived as an Arab, working in several jobs.

Sometimes he posed as an Arab intellectual, sometimes as a simple manual labourer.

He was very modest and winning about his remarkable achievement of crossing the racial, social and

economic line that divides Arab from Jew. He revealed that the main feeling of many Arabs is the constant fear of getting into trouble with the law.

One thing he did for his investigative reporting that did not redound to his credit was having a love affair with a Jewish girl. For her, he posed as an intellectual Arab. From what he said, I gathered that she took it very seriously, and suffered agonies as a result. He apologized to her on the programme, but I doubt if she could have found this expression of regret adequate.

He had some amusing experiences. One Jewish employer was so pleased with Binur that he suggested that Binur should change his name to Rafi and should pass himself off as a Jew. A waitress with whom he worked in a restaurant said, when she thought he couldn't hear, that he only needed a little improvement to become a Jew.

SOMEBODY who was out of the country for a month and saw this Sunday night's *Dynasty* was astonished to find how much she had

missed. When she left, old Cecil was still alive and single, though barely, and the baby had been kidnapped. Now she found herself baffled by Alexis having inherited Cecil's money and having found a new son, Adam, who was about to have an incestuous affair with Fallon.

Considering that we had no episodes for a couple of weeks while my friend was abroad, because of all the festivals we had, I must admit that the script-writers manage to pack a lot of plot into every second of viewing time. There is never a dull moment.

Why Fallon and Adam didn't consummate the affair in the usual manner in that romantic spot is beyond me. Did some instinct warn her? Or him? Of course, I am quite sure that he is not Blake's son, despite his teethmarks on that rattle. Cecil is the real father. Remember that clause in his will that Alexis gets all the dough, instead of sharing with Jeff, if she produces an heir? So why shouldn't Adam count? I'm not sure what this does to the incest. Does half-incest matter between friends?

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Heritage shines in performance

David Finko, composer, pianist and conductor, in a programme of his chamber music, assisted by members of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. (Jerusalem, Leo Modell Hall, May 12.) *Fantasia on a Medieval Russian Theme*, for piano (1961); *Sonata for piano*, "Solomon Mikhoels" (1964); *Lamentations of Jerusalem*, for solo violin (1969); *From Septet* (1982); *Concerto for viola d'amore, guitar and chamber orchestra* (1977).

DAVID FINKO was born in

Leningrad and now lives in Philadelphia, where he composes, teaches and performs. He is imbued with great breadth of vision and tremendous sensitivity to his Jewish heritage in all its aspects.

With the exception of the opening item, the programme notes relate all the works performed to some aspect



of that heritage: the Sonata to a unique theatrical personality and his art; the Septet to the Holocaust; and the Concerto to the spiritual themes in the Kabbala. It would be impossible not to take this material seriously, if only on the basis of its stated intentions.

Fortunately, there is also a firm musical basis to this body of work. Finko is a thoroughly professional composer, who has developed an interesting approach to fusing the most disparate musical elements. He can glide smoothly and convincingly through cantillation-based motifs, medieval style, Eastern European themes, baroque and contemporary

idioms, and put them all at the service of his expressive intentions.

In addition, Finko has a sound grasp of thematic development; when he gets hold of an idea he explores it relentlessly from all angles and in many possible permutations, which is often simultaneously exhausting and exhilarating.

His dramatic sense is extremely acute, and the ebb and flow of his work is a finely-tuned psychological process in which climaxes arrive just when the listener, in retrospect, realizes they should have - but, paradoxically, always with a sense of the unexpected.

The performances were well executed by soloists Daniel Fradkin (violin and viola d'amore), Abraham Spector (guitar), Finko himself (in the piano works) and a dedicated chamber ensemble garnered from the ranks of the JSO.

DANIEL ZIFF

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IT LOOKS like a cross between a bumble bee and an arthritic dragonfly, and it sounds like a runaway electric shaver. But when the Gambit prototype lifted off last month on its maiden flight, it launched Israel into a new sphere—the light pleasure airplane market.

Gambit may not be the ideal airplane for racy pilots with dreams of vertical streaks into the stratosphere, but for the student pilot or a civilian weekend flyer it offers real virtues—a forgiving nature and ease of operation.

This is not an aircraft for aerobically fit, but a comfortable, easy-to-fly trainer and leisure flying machine," says Baruch Levanon, president and test pilot of SciCraft, the Cyclone Aviation subsidiary that developed the Gambit.

Built from composite layers of strong yet flexible fiberglass-like materials, Gambit is a small, lightweight (250 kg.) two-seater airplane. It sports an enormous bubble perspex cockpit, a rear-mounted "pusher" engine and an unorthodox wing design. The main wing rides high above and behind the cockpit and is equipped with vertical "winglets" and down-sweeping "finch" wingtips, designed to add stability and smoothness. The low-lying nose sprouts a moustache-like set of additional wings, known in the trade as "Canard." These front wings prevent the aircraft from stalling and spinning out of control at low speeds and at dangerous altitudes.

If the designs and aspirations of the people at SciCraft come true, the new aircraft will become a forerunner in an attempt to bring small plane aviation into the 21st century.

"Virtually all of today's commercial trainers and two-seaters are based on outdated World War II designs and technologies. We designed the Gambit from the ground, using the latest innovations in aeronautical engineering," says Levanon.

Gambit incorporated some of the innovations that were used by famous airplane designer Burt Rutan from California. One of Rutan's creations, the Voyager, flew around the world non-stop earlier this year.

Levanon, himself an aeronautical engineer, participated in every stage of the development of the Gambit and now takes the aircraft through the grueling stages of design verification and airborne tests.

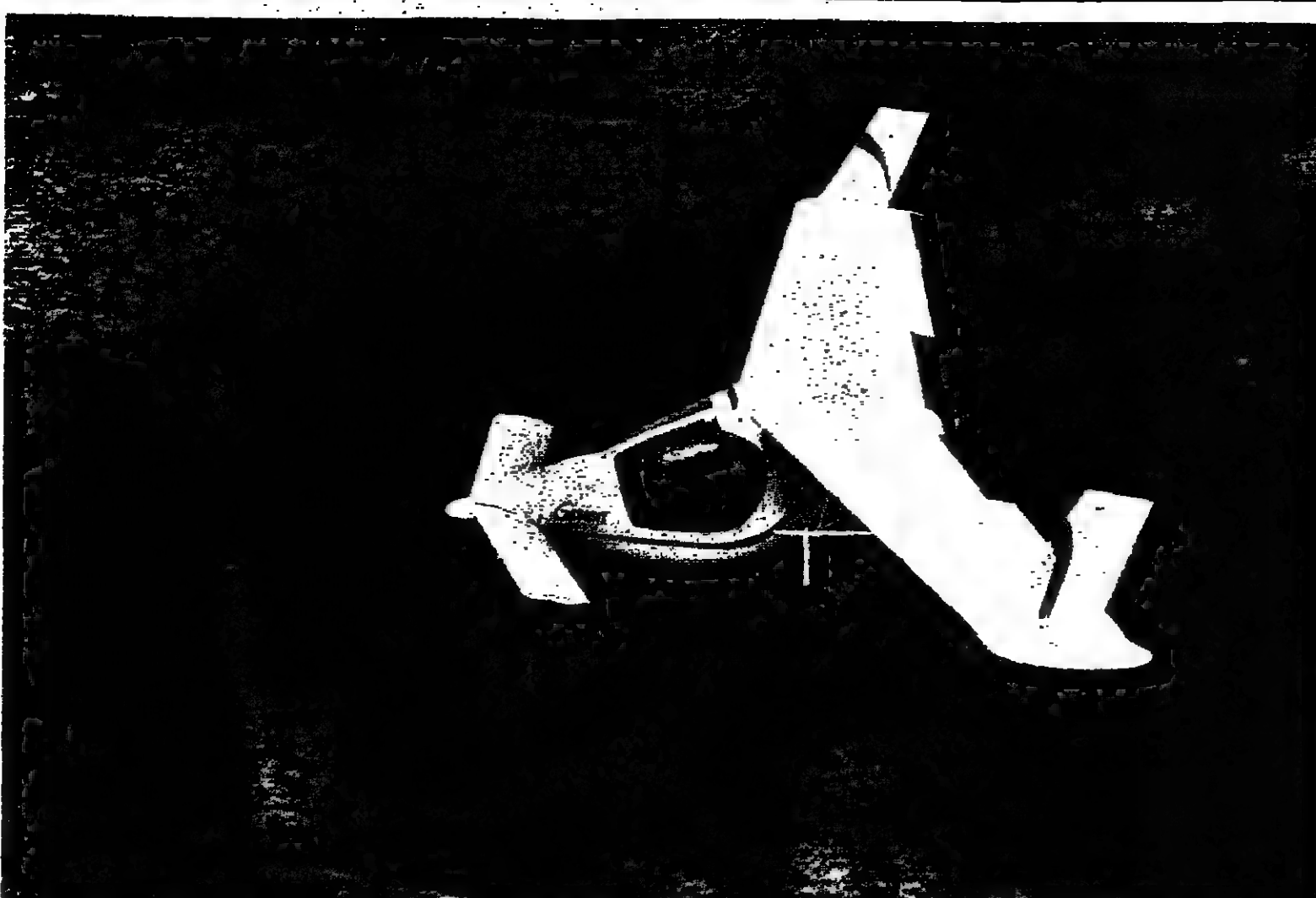
Once in the air, Levanon rocks and shakes the aircraft according to a pre-arranged schedule. A ground crew of engineers and technicians, headed by Cyclone's chief test pilot Danny Gross, directs and monitors the test, recording the pilot's comments and filming the flight both from the ground and from inside the cockpit. A computerized flight-data collector in the cockpit registers crucial flight information fed to it by a set of wingtip-mounted sensors.

SCICRAFT views American private pilots as the major potential customers for the Gambit.

"America and Europe are hungry for an inexpensive and easy-to-fly small aircraft," says Levanon. There are 400,000 licensed private pilots in California, Texas and Florida alone, and more than 260,000 private pilots in America own a small aircraft.

"An old-generation trainer such as the Cessna 152 costs around \$70,000 today, and very few private pilots or flight schools can afford such an expensive plane," he says. "We are going to offer them a better aircraft, with about the same performance envelope and the same equipment for less than \$30,000," says Levanon.

SciCraft plans to stick a foot in the competitive American market by



Flight of the Gambit

Doron Pely

offering the Gambit as a home-built aircraft kit. Building a kit airplane in the backyard or the garage of a suburban house is not a novelty in America—there are tens of thousands of kits in various stages of completion, lying in garages all over the country.

Every year, thousands of do-it-yourself flyers converge on the airport at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, with their machines for a noisy week of demonstrations, comparisons, beer-drinking and camaraderie. SciCraft displayed a non-flying model of Gambit at last year's meet, and Levanon says reactions were more than favorable.

Home-built "experimental" airplanes enjoy a less rigorous registration and testing procedure than general aviation aircraft. The assumption is that if you're going to put your life on the line and fly a self-made plane, you'll do your utmost to make sure you live to land and celebrate with friends and family.

In order to qualify for a home-built designation, 51 per cent of the airplane kit should be assembled by the home builder; but the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in charge of supervising and licensing every home-built machine doesn't stress the point too much. The FAA is interested in allowing well-equipped factories to produce and partially assemble safer home-built aircraft, even if the 51 per cent rule is violated slightly.

Asked to compare the budgetary problems of the Lavi project with his company's development costs, Levanon laughs. "We can finish development of the Gambit and go into production with the decimal round-up left-overs of the Lavi monies," he says.

Right now, the Gambit project



Israel's bid to capture a piece of the American light pleasure airplane market. (Photos by G. Feinblatt/Media)

needs \$2 million to complete development and SciCraft is looking for venture capital to push the project through.

Each of SciCraft's success in marketing the Gambit beyond the home-built market will depend on the effort by aviation associations in America and Europe to create a new Recreational Pilot Certificate category. If accepted by the FAA and its European counterparts, this will establish less complex and cheaper certification requirements for pilots who fly for pleasure only and use uncontrolled airports. At present, the cost of obtaining a private-pilot license is too high and the entire industry is suffering from a sharp drop in demand for trainers and

small pleasure-craft.

Once the new category is instituted, SciCraft hopes the market will recover. The company will then jump the next hurdle and get the Gambit certified as a general aviation airplane. This will allow flight schools and private pilots to buy ready-made airplanes and use them for flight training as well as for pleasure.

For those who experienced the agony of trying to shift around in the cramped cockpit space of a Cessna 152 or a Piper Tomahawk, the Gambit's seating arrangement will feel spacious. The seats are wide and comfortable. There's ample legroom and the huge perspex bubble allows excellent visibility in all directions, even down.

The instrument-panel appears a little empty at first glance, but a second look reveals that all the required and necessary dials are present. There's enough room for an additional radio/navigation transceiver set and other optional equipment.

Levanon estimates that the Gambit will be ready for commercial production toward the end of 1988. Between today and that happy date lie hundreds of hours of tricky test flights. Before he straps himself in the cockpit, Levanon checks the handle of his escape parachute and the bubble ejection mechanism. They are the only attachments he hopes he will never have to test.

Components of leadership

Tora Today/Pinhas H. Peli

PRIESTHOOD, according to Tora, is hereditary. It is transmitted genetically from father to son. One does not choose to belong to the priesthood and be a *kohen* (priest), or to cease being one. He is born to be one if he is a direct descendant of the seed of Aaron *ha-kohen*, the first high priest.

Notwithstanding this right acquired by birth, the Tora prescribes an entire system of laws which pertain to the priests, and without which they would not fulfill the qualifications for their calling to serve as functionaries in the sanctuary (Leviticus, chapters 21, 22). The common denominator of all those special laws is the high standard of holiness which must be followed by those who are entrusted to minister in the service of the Holy One in the place of holy worship.

These special laws were given to the *kohen* "for he is holy unto his God," *kadosh hu* (ibid., 21:7). He is, as it would seem from this statement, intrinsically holy, the holiness stemming exclusively from the special relationship between him and God. This, however, is followed immediately (verse 8) with the command (addressed to Israel): *v'kidasha...* "thou shalt sanctify him... He shall be holy unto thee... for I the Lord who sanctifies you, am holy."

If he is, by the sheer virtue of his birth, "holy unto his God," *kadosh hu* why is it necessary that we should "sanctify him?" *v'kidasha*?

We have here a threefold representation of the holy: God, Israel and the priest. They are intertwined together. God is holy and shares his holiness with the priest who "is holy unto his God." At the same time, God also sanctifies Israel, who in turn, is commanded to sanctify the priest. Thus an unbroken interacting chain of holiness (i.e. presence of the divine) is created to help raise humans to a higher level of existence, bringing them closer to God via the sanctuary and priest, as well as through their own divinely inspired ethical behavior ("you shall be holy" of Leviticus, ch. 19).

The priest is holy, because he was born a *kohen*, but he must also be made holy by the acts of the people. In talmudic literature (T.B., Yoma 19a), there is a legal discussion whether the priests serving in the Sanctuary are "our emissaries" to God (*shluhei didan*), or "God's emissaries to us" (*shluhei d'rahmanan*). Be that as it may, although the authority of the *kohen* is vested in him by his birthright, we too are obligated to "make him holy," and treat him in such manner that will express our reverence for him (like calling the *kohen* first to the Tora reading, which is derived from this command, see T.B. Gittin 53b). This of course puts an obligation on the *kohen* as well, not to seek protection under his clerical robe, nor his rabbinical authoritative position, but to act in such a way, that would command the reverence of the people towards him. Unfortunately, some clergymen act in a manner that may not cause them to be officially "defrocked," but may prove them to be definitely "unsuited"...

TRUE RELIGIOUS leadership can, operate successfully not when it is aloof and removed from the people, but when deeply involved with it and simultaneously earning its respect. There is a delicate balance between the priest as a holy being, whose holiness derives from his own independent birthright, that has nothing to do with what people think or feel, and the position of holy leadership which stems from acts of sanctification by the people. In order to be a true leader, the *kohen* must indeed exercise leadership and the people must consent to accept his authority and be led by him, though sometimes it may be in opposition to their own inclinations and desires. A religious leader who wishes always to be popular and liked by one and all, is no leader. Neither is the religious leader who issues orders and decrees regardless of what the people need or are ready to accept.

The ideal personality of the *kohen* is a combination of *kadosh hu*, being "holy to his God" and of *v'kidasha*, being sanctified and revered by the people: having the courage to take unpopular steps when necessary, and being, nevertheless, revered by the people who are convinced of his impeccable integrity and pure motivations.

In Eastern European Jewish folklore, they used to say, that a rabbi who never fights with his community is no rabbi; on the other hand, a rabbi who always fights with his community is no *menasch...* Differences between the religious leader and his congregation are expected, even welcome, within reason. As the religious leader is warned to be sensitive and pay attention to his congregation, the congregants too, must realize, that the *kohen's*, or rabbi's, power does not derive from those who have the formal authority to hire and fire him. It is rooted in the holiness bestowed upon the religious functionary by a revered tradition and a long chain of authority transmitted from generation to generation and empowered by God himself.

The advice of the first century Rabbi Joshua B. Prahiah (Avot 1:6): *ase lekha rav*, "make yourself a rabbi!", was interpreted by a modern rabbi to suggest that one must seek and "make" a rabbi for himself and follow his instructions, even where he thinks that the rabbi is mistaken or that he is too young and inexperienced. The well-being of a community depends on accepting the authority of one's rabbi and not, as so often happens, when laymen try to dictate to their rabbis what to do, or even go behind their back to seek advice on religious matters from some famous *gedolim*, or so-called "great men," other than their own spiritual leader. Those fail to recognize the *kadosh hu* aspect which their religious leader represents by virtue of the position he holds. They also fail to fulfill the command of *v'kidasha*, in which we were commanded to hold in sacred reverence the *kohen*, the priests whose lives are dedicated to serve God and the community.

The Tora portion for this week is Emor (Leviticus 21:1-24:23). Rabbi Peli is the Blechman Professor of Jewish thought and literature, Ben Gurion University of the Negev.

If it's Tuesday this must be...

Abraham Rabinovich

NAMES ON the road map such as Waterloo, Bastogne and Ypres testify to the myriad of foreigners who have visited Belgium over the centuries to fight their wars on its soil. The current Belgian government, exploiting the spotlight focused on Brussels by the Eurovision contest, recently invited journalists from the 21 foreign countries participating in the competition to a four-day tour aimed at proving that tourists to

Belgium can occupy themselves, even when they are not marching across it with guns in their hands on their way to wreak havoc on Germany or France.

The tour proved, however, that a country is better seen through a tent flap or from the open road than from the windows of luxury hotels and tour buses. Belgian hospitality consisted of a succession of official lunches and dinners, sometimes lasting

three hours or more, than left little time for sightseeing or for feeling the pulse of the country. Leuven, with its ancient university, may be a fascinating town hall into which they were hustled to hear more speeches.

The medieval city of Bruges, cut by canals, is probably the most notable tourist site in Belgium. It is well preserved and has its charm, including a splendid town hall, but it is a far cry from Venice or from being "the most romantic city in the world" as an official brochure calls it.

Despite Belgium's role as the administrative heart of Europe, headquarters for both Nato and the European Community, there is a sense of provincialism about it, a sense of vagueness about national identity that the elaborate self-promotion directed by officials at their journalist guests only accentuated.

"Well, what do you think about Belgium?" asked a Brussels journalist assigned to write a story about his

visiting colleagues' impressions. When the reply seemed too guarded, the local journalist attempted to prime the pump. "Do you see it as the capital of Europe?" The visitor had to reply that he did not.

Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek, who knows about such things, believes that the best food in Europe is to be found in Belgium. Belgian officials say that there are more three star restaurants in their country than in France.

The most distinctive feature of Belgium, however, is one addressed only in passing by officials during the tour—the parallel systems of government maintained by the French-speaking and Flemish-speaking populations, each with their own executives and parliaments, and the elaborate arrangements to accommodate the two communities on carefully balanced terms within the central government. Many of the visiting delegations like Israel, Cyprus and Yugoslavia, which have communal problems of their own, would have liked to know more about the apparently successful way this power-sharing works.

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<p>TUESDAY, MAY 19</p> <p>08:30-10:30 EXECUTIVE-LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS Chairperson: Daniel J. Elazar, Bar Ilan, Temple Louis Henkin, Columbia University Louis Fisher, Library of Congress Michèle Pomanceau, Hebrew University Harold Hymen, Rice University</p> <p>11:30-12:30 THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FREE EXERCISE CLAUSES: RESOLVING THE INHERENT TENSION Chairperson: Yehoshua Arieli, Hebrew University Jesse Choper, University of California, Berkeley Nathan Lewin, Attorney, Washington, D.C. Walter Murphy, Princeton University Shimon Shalom, Hebrew University</p> <p>14:30-16:30 MINORITY RIGHTS UNDER THE CONSTITUTION: RACE Chairperson: Mechal Sobel, Haifa University Glen Loury, Harvard University Frances Ridley, Hebrew University Louis Henkin, Columbia University Meir Gebehy, Civil Service Commission, Israel</p> <p>18:30-19:30 MINORITY RIGHTS UNDER THE CONSTITUTION: GENDER Chairperson: Aryeh Goran, Hebrew University Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg, D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals Norma Basch, Rutgers University Martin Shapiro, University of California, Berkeley Konrad Martin, Tel Aviv University</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY, MAY 20</p> <p>08:30-10:30 INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES AND THE RIGHTS OF PRIVACY Chairperson: Nathan Lewin, Attorney, Washington, D.C. Wallace Mendelson, University of Texas Walter Murphy, Princeton University Arnold Enker, Bar Ilan University Jacob Landynski, New School for Social Research</p> <p>11:30-12:30 REFORMING THE CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM Chairperson: Robert Goldwin, American Enterprise Institute James Sundquist, Brookings Institution Theodore Lowi, Cornell University Daniel J. Elazar, Bar Ilan University, Temple University Donald Robinson, Smith College David Ricot, Hebrew University</p> <p>14:30-16:30 THE IMPACT OF THE CONSTITUTION ABROAD: THE VIEW FROM ISRAEL Chairperson: Ari Weiss, Attorney, Tel Aviv Justice Aaron Barak, Supreme Court of Israel David Kruttschnitt, Hebrew University Eyalim Rubinstein, Secretary to the Israeli Cabinet Allan Shapiro, Haifa University</p> <p>18:30-19:30 SOCIAL CHANGE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: A NEW ROLE FOR THE CONSTITUTION? Chairperson: Shimon Shalom Henry Abraham, University of Virginia Martin Shapiro, University of California, Berkeley Michael Weitzer, Institute for Advanced Studies, Princeton Malcolm Feeley, University of California, Berkeley</p>
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Tel Aviv	7:08 p.m.	8:11 p.m.
Beth	7:02 p.m.	8:12 p.m.
Bethlehem	7:06 p.m.	8:04 p.m.
Eilat	7:03 p.m.	8:05 p.m.

Tora Parties: Eilat

JERUSALEM	JERUSALEM
YESHURUN CENTRAL SYNAGOGUE Friday, Mincha 7:10. Shabbat, Shabbat 8: Mincha 7:15, 6:30. Maariv 8:10. Cantor: Asher Haimovitz.	REDEEMER CHURCH (Lutheran) Muristan Rd. Old City, Jerusalem. Sunday Services: English 9 a.m.; German 10:30 a.m. Tel. 252543, 828401.
JERUSALEM GREAT SYNAGOGUE Friday, Mincha 7:15 p.m. Shabbat, Shabbat 8: Mincha 7:15. Cantor: Naphthal Herzog and Jerusalem Great Synagogue Choir conducted by Eli Jaffe.	CHRIST CHURCH (Anglican) opp. Citadel. 9:30 Family service, 7:00 p.m. Evening service. Bible study, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.
WORLD COUNCIL OF SYNAGOGUES , Conservative, 4 Agon, Friday, Mincha 6:00. Shabbat, Shabbat 8:30. Saturday, Mincha 6:30. Dvar Torah: Rabbi Dr. Yosef Green. Hazzan: Haima Rastica.	BAPTIST CONGREGATION , 4 Marks, West Jerusalem. Sunday morning service, 10 a.m. Tel. 02-714659.
HEBREW UNION COLLEGE , Jewish Institute of Religion (Reform), 13 King David St. Sat. 9:30 a.m. Information on college programs; guided tour of campus. Service: 10 a.m.	ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND near Railway Station. Sunday morning service, 10 a.m. Tel. 02-714659.
TEL AVIV TEL AVIV CT. SYNAGOGUE, 110 Allenby. Shabbat services conducted by Cantor Natfali.	PENTECOSTAL WORSHIP SERVICE, MT. ZION FELLOWSHIP , 7:30 p.m. Fri., Sat., Sun. Tel. 828964.
	ST. PAUL'S (Pentecostal) , 32 Shvite Yitael. 6:30 p.m. Saturday. Tel. 02-717988.

WHAT'S ON

JERUSALEM	HADASSAH	HEBREW UNIVERSITY	AMIT WOMEN
Information Centres IGJA INFORMATION CENTRE , 1 Ibn Gabirol St., Rehavia, Jerusalem. Features TV news programmes from the U.S., continental A.P. News telecasts, videotapes on UJA (United Jewish Appeal) sponsored programmes in Israel. Open Sunday-Tuesday, 3:00-7:00 p.m. For more information call 02-246807, 02-240795.	Hadassah - Tourism Centre will be closed. Lag Be'omer (17.5.87) and no tour will take place.	English tours daily Sunday through Thursday: 1. Mount Scopus, 11 a.m. from the Bronfman Reception Centre, Administration Building, Buses 9, 28, 4a, 26 & 23 to the 'first underground stop' 2. Givat Ram Campus, 9.8.11 a.m. from the Sherman Building, Buses 9, 28, & 24. Tel. 882818.	AMIT WOMEN (Formerly American Mizrahi Women) , Free Morning Tours - 8 Alkalai Street, Jerusalem. Tel. 02-689222.

ART GUIDE

Notices in this feature are charged at NIS 5.50 per line, including VAT. One-weekly insertion costs NIS 25.55 per line including VAT, per month.

JERUSALEM

Museums and Exhibitions

ISRAEL MUSEUM, New Exhibition: Treasures of the 8th cent. to modern times (opens 18.5) 0 Continuing Exhibitions: 0 Pieter Van Lint (Flemish, 1609-1690), 0 Achilles Among the Daughters of Lysomedes 0 The Supreme Court Building, Jerusalem, 1888 competition documentation 0 Honore Daumier, Armand Hammer Collection 0 News in Antiquity 57 0 Goroovoy Donation, Mid-19th Century Photographs of Human Form 0 Ancient Masks and Rattles, special Purim and general exhibit. From Neolithic to Roman period (Rockefeller) 0 Felix Nussbaum 1904-1944, artist who perished in Holocaust 0 "From Dada to 3D," Meet an Israeli Artist, David Gerstein 0 Artists Quoting Artists 0 Tamara Rikman: The Bewitched Shores, tempera and lacquer paintings of Great Alaya-Jarifa 0 Yehudei Srelnichman, comprehensive show of oils, 1940's to present 0 Animals in Ancient Art (Rockefeller) 0 Ancient Glass Exhibit 0 Islamic Art (Paley Centre, open, Rockefeller) 0 Miriam Bar-Tov, 4 Arab Kingdoms 0 Comic Theatre Mask, Pottery, Hellenistic Period (2nd and 2nd cent. B.C.), Rockefeller Museum 0 Permanent exhibitions of Archaeology, Judaica and Ethnic Art.

L.A. MAYER MUSEUM FOR ISLAMIC ART, Visiting hours: Sun-Thurs, 10-1; 3:30-6; Fri. closed, Sat, 10-1, 2 Hapmatel St., Tel. 02-6612812, Bus No. 15.

OLD YERUSH COURT MUSEUM, Life in the Jewish community in the Old City, mid-19th century-Western Wall, 1, 8 Or Hahaim, Jewish Quarter, Old City, Sun-Thur, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

SIR ISAAC AND LADY EDITH WOLFSON MUSEUM at Heichal Shalom: Special Exhibitions: Kovno Ghetto, images from Hidden Camera, photographed by Zvi Kadushin, Permanent exhibition of Judaica, Diorama Room: History of Jewish People.

MISHKENOT SHA'ANANIM, Fisher Hill, "Works on Paper" - Hannah Burgarely, Joseph Hertz, Herta and Paul Amiria, Derek Stein, Shaul Shani, 118-12.8, Hours: Sun, Thur, 5-8 Wed, 10-12, Tue, 10-8, Sat, 11-1, Mon. closed, Tel. 224321.

TEL AVIV

Museums

TEL AVIV MUSEUM, New Exhibitions: From Manes to Picasso (opens 18.5 at 9 p.m.) 0 Continuing Exhibitions: Salvador Dali, Writer/Illustrator 0 Alexander Archipenko, A Centennial Tribute, sculptures, sculpto-paintings and drawings, 0 Edward Munch (prints): Death, Love and Anxiety, Special Exhibit: Erich

Mandelson Centenary, Drawings from 1920s and 1930s. Visiting hours: Sun-Thur, 10-2, 5-9, Sat, 12-2, 7-10; Fri. closed, Helena Rubinstein Pavilion: Gilberta Zorio and Anna Powers Movement in Italy, Visiting hours: (Museum and Pavilion): Sun, Tue, Wed, Thur, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Mon, 5-8 p.m., Fri, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Sat, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; 7-10 p.m.

HAIFA

Museums

HAIFA MUSEUM, 28 Shabbat Levy St. Tel. 04-523255. Exhibitions: Ancient Art, Coln of Akko in Ancient Times, Museums & Ethnology: world paper and Open: Sun, Thur, & Sat, 10-1; Tue, Thur, & Sat also 6-9. Ticket also admits to National Maritime Museum, Japanese and Prehistoric Museum.

THE REUBEN AND EDITH HECHT MUSEUM FOR THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF ERZET ISRAEL, at Haifa University, open Sun, Mon, Wed, 10-1, Tue, 10-1; 4-6; Fri. closed; Sat, 10-1. Entrance free.

OTHER CENTRES

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THE DANGER to the economy posed by elections is one of the arguments which opponents of an early poll have put forward in the ongoing debate between the Likud and the Alignment. Unfortunately for the economy, the results of that dispute may leave the country with the worst of both possible worlds. There is little doubt that an election campaign is on, but the question is whether it will last four or 16 months.

Judging from this week's developments, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir will be heading a coalition of 60 MKs, with the major opposition being a nominal part of the cabinet, and taking part in the decision making process, or rather in the non-making of decision. It is this bizarre government which will have to handle an economy that could easily relapse into the chaos reigning in 1983 and 1984.

This analysis remains true even if the Labour Party eventually leaves the coalition. The Likud will be left heading a shaky coalition of 60 MKs, open to blackmail, and unable to reach any important decision. The economy will simply drift towards the unknown.

The first portent of future development will come on Monday, when the Knesset Finance Committee is asked by the Treasury to approve the bail-out scheme for the moshavim. Even in the better days of the national unity government, it was not always easy for the Likud and the Labour Party to agree on anything. This time, a miracle will be needed for Likud MKs to approve the moshav rescue operation, even though not all moshavim are linked to the Labour Party.

This will only be the beginning. The committee, without whose approval it is impossible to implement any economic decision, will become no more than an arena for angry accusations and ugly exchanges.

But the Knesset Finance Committee will only be a sideshow. The main event will take place elsewhere. Finance Minister Moshe Nissim knows

how much he owes Vice Premier Shimon Peres, who almost single-handedly convinced the Histadrut to agree to the Treasury's economic plan last January, including a partial waiving of March's cost-of-living allowance. That accord saved the economy from a much higher inflation rate following January's 10 per cent devaluation of the shekel.

Nissim is now financing the opening of negotiations on new collective wage agreements to replace those which expired on March 31. There are already signs that the labour front is heating up. The Treasury wants labour agreement to a policy of wage restraint. But in the present political atmosphere, it is not likely that such policy will be viable. Shimon Peres will be the last person on earth to assist Shamir or Nissim.

Under such conditions, it is very easy to posit a scenario of constant economic deterioration. If wages start rising, it will not take long before industrialists begin raising prices, and demanding a devaluation of the shekel. Since devaluations are not particularly popular, politicians will try to delay their implementation as much as possible. This will lead to a wave of speculation and to heavy purchases of foreign currency. Eventually, the government will be forced to devalue, under the worst possible conditions.

The developing climate of uncertainty will affect the ongoing economic expansion. Given the endless number of question marks, firms are likely to call off any plans for investment, at least until the political situation becomes clearer.

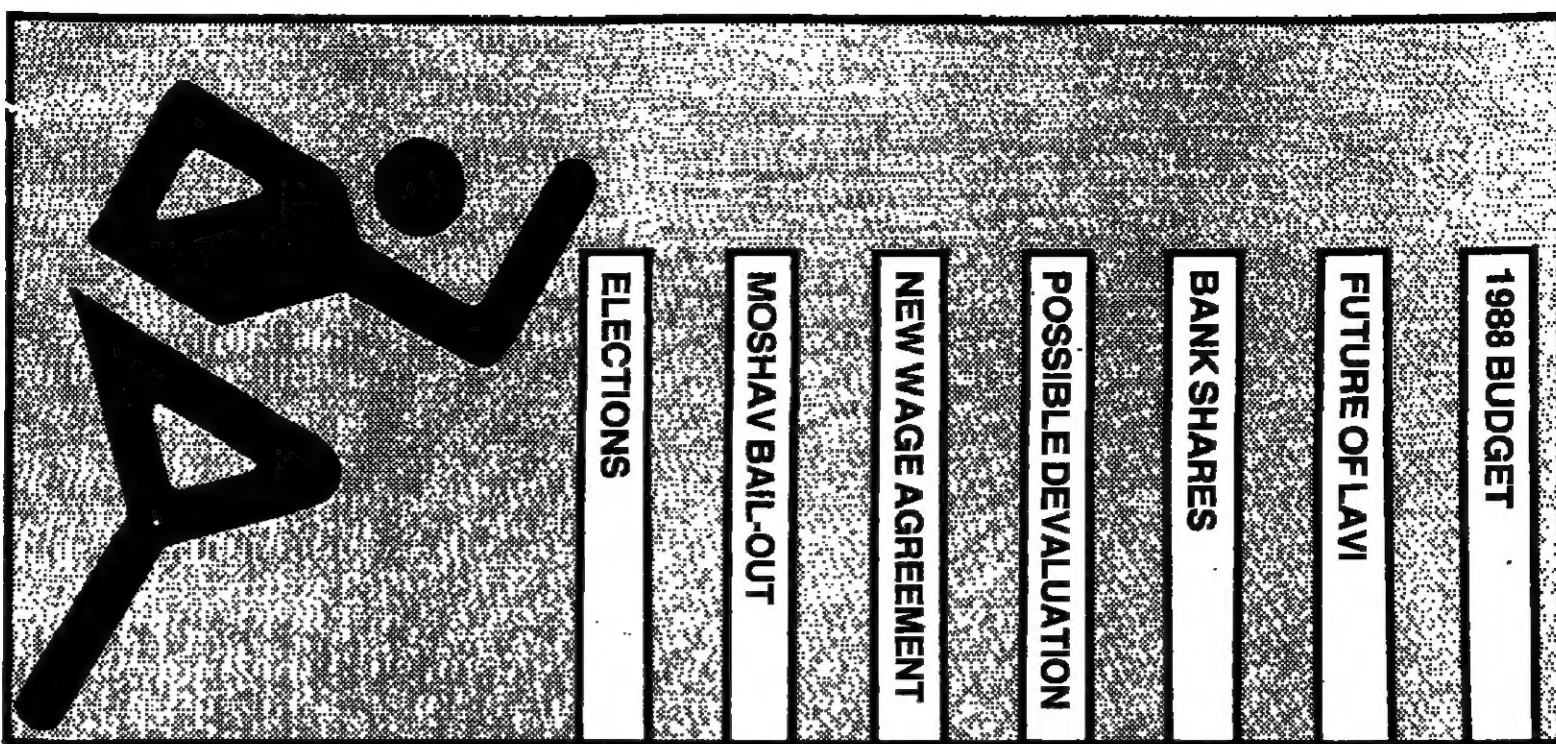
Moreover, it is this government which will have to take decisions concerning the implementation of the bank shares arrangement. The arrangement will be executed starting in October, and by then, decisions about ways to convince the public to reinvest proceeds from bank shares worth some \$4b. should be taken.

Determinations will be also needed regarding the ownership of the banks, voting rights, and a score of other delicate questions. In the

ELECTION FEVER

The economy can't wait

Avi Temkin argues that in the present political crisis, the economy could relapse into the chaos of previous years with all decision-making bodies paralysed. He says 'If the country must go to the polls, it must go as soon as possible.'



present situation of inter-party strife, there is little hope that sound decisions will be made. One can imagine the government deciding that the bank shares it holds will be sold to the general public at very low prices, thus incurring a heavy capital loss, only because such a sale would be popular.

The longer the present stalemate persists the greater the danger. It was the weakness of the coalition

which produced the 1983 arrangement. MK Avraham Shapira applied pressure and got the Treasury to agree to conditions it deplores to this day. Something similar could happen in the coming months, which could affect the economy for many years.

THE BANK shares arrangement is the only one that will be affected by party considera-

tions. In a few weeks, the inner cabinet is due to discuss the future of the Lavi fighter. The army wants the project scrapped if no funds outside the defence budget are available for it. Some economic experts think continuing the Lavi will represent too large a burden on the economy. But both parties are competing for popular support and when politicians are keeping in mind the 20,000 workers in the Israel

Aircraft Industries and their families, there is little chance that those experts' views will be given much weight during political deliberations. Again, the price for the wrong decisions will be eventually paid for by the entire economy.

To the man in the street, these issues may appear rather abstract, only indirectly impacting on his daily life. But in reality, the paralysis in the cabinet will directly affect him.

Decisions are still pending regarding the Health and Education Ministries' budgets. From the point of view of the Likud, these are "Labour" ministries. Thus, there will be little motivation to solve any possible crisis in these two areas. This could mean strikes by teachers and nurses, hospitals running out of funds, and schools closing down.

Furthermore, those ministries controlled by the Likud would no longer have to take fiscal considerations into account in their spending plans. Housing Minister David Levy and Industry and Trade Minister Ariel Sharon are likely to start pouring funds into West Bank and Gaza settlements in an effort to create facts before the elections. A 16-month-long election campaign will only prolong the potential fiscal agony.

The present situation will last at least until November. By then the Treasury will be in the midst of planning for the 1988 budget. But given the political uncertainty, there will be little point in even thinking of planning budgetary allocation, and even less about budget cuts. Even without elections, the budget for 1988/89 would have been very complicated. But it will be all the more so when planning must be done when the country is paralysed by campaign which could go on for months and months.

The only logical decision would be then to decide that if the country must go to the polls, it must go as soon as possible. Israeli practice is that elections campaigns last three to four months. The damage to the economy from such a campaign would be minimal. Some decisions could be delayed. The one about the Lavi, for example, could be put off for two or three months. The Bank of Israel could be asked to go ahead with plans for the implementation of the bank shares arrangement, which would be presented in the late autumn to the next government. But to ask the economy to wait until November 1988 is to ask for a disaster.

How do Israel's banks differ from one another? Pinhas Landau, in the third of a series on the banking system, examines the current changes taking place.

THE MOST important point to grasp with regard to the Israeli banking system is that it is by no means a homogeneous entity. It probably never was, and it certainly isn't today; and it seems set to become steadily less so in the future.

Most objective observers accept that the five main banking groups divide most easily into three classes. The Big Two or Hapoalim and Leumi, then Discount and Mizrahi, although these have increasingly less in common, and finally First International, cruising in the fast lane all by itself.

They all still have a great deal in common, but the nature of things has changed over recent years. Until 1983, the common interest of the banks was that the government so arranged things that they would all have an easy and pleasant existence. In effect, and sometimes in practice, there was a cartel in that all the banks operated in a sheltered, if not in a union, so to speak, environment for one way or another.

Today this is much less true. There are still many areas in which there is no real competition, or in which the banks all want the same thing. An example of this is the joint demand for an end to discrimination against the banks in national and local taxation. But there has been a fundamental change of approach within the banks, and the new generation of bankers tend to demand from the government something quite different from the old-style "play along with us and we'll all be happy."

What one hears increasingly from senior bankers is, formerly only in private but recently in public as well, is the demand that the government simply withdraw and let each bank do as it thinks best. This apparently

heroic stance stems only partially from an ideological commitment to competition as a good thing *per se*. The more weighty factor leading to the new attitude has been the accumulated experience of the last 15 years, including the "regulation," "arrangement" and everything else.

This has taught the banks that to let the government determine how and what they do may provide short-term advantages, but leads to a creeping loss of managerial control and has disastrous consequences in the longer term.

In short, therefore, the bankers now espouse a line that says to the authorities, "Neither thy honey nor thy sting." This may seem absurd, since the banks have gone through the stages of gorging themselves on government money and have already been stung from head to toe. But it took until last year for them to discover that they couldn't eat the honey without enduring the sting. That, in essence, is the difference between the new men and the new regime and the old ones.

A concrete example of how this new philosophy operates is currently available in the long-running squabble over bank charges. These have been frozen since July 1985, apart from one minor adjustment.

Increasingly, the bankers' argument has changed from merely petitioning the price-control bureaucrats to allow a hike across the board, to an appeal to the Treasury and the Bank of Israel simply to cancel the controls on bank charges.

They promise that, after catching up with inflation in the freeze period, these charges will soon differ between banks and will not all rise by the same margin, because inter-bank competition will prevent it. If mas-

Banking on themselves

sive jumps do occur, they argue, the government can always reimpose controls, but they ask for the chance to show that there is a freer market in the industry now.

THE EXPERIENCE of the limited deregulation that has taken place so far in the financial markets, and of those few areas of banking where the government has not been calling the shots, shows that there can be effective competition — much to the surprise of many people both in and outside the industry.

This trend seems set to continue. If the main development of 1986 was the move towards consumer loans and a broader lending base, this year's innovation is the arrival, at long last, of financial instruments designed to reduce risk and overcome uncertainty.

Vehicles such as forwards, options and even swaps, which were hitherto legendary beasts known to exist overseas but never seen in Israel, are now beginning to appear. Bank Leumi has made the early running in this field, as it did in the retail banking developments last year; but it is only a matter of time before other banks offer their own contributions. Competition in innovation will therefore remain an important feature on the banking landscape for the foreseeable future.

But there will be other forms of competition as well. And these, more than the open competition in services for the general public, bring us back to the differences between the banks. In terms of their current strength and weak points, their priorities and the strategy and tactics they are pursuing, each bank is a different entity.

BANK HAPOLIM, for instance, has both advantages and disadvantages that none of the others has. Hapoalim's strong points are pre-

cisely in the areas where the others have had most problems in the last two years — ownership, management and personnel.

There is no doubt about who owns Hapoalim, nor about the relationships between the owners, directors and managers. Hevrat Ha'Ovdim, the bank's parent company, and in particular its chairman Yisrael Kessar, has finished sorting out the overlaps and inconsistencies between the three levels of control and command.

As a result, the rights and responsibilities of the board of management, headed by Amiram Sivan, the board of directors, headed by Eitan Berglass, and the major shareholders, headed by Kessar, are clear to all concerned and, more important, seem to be functioning properly.

In addition, Hapoalim has its traditional strength in industrial relations to lean on. There has never been a strike in the bank, and management/staff co-operation is remarkably good, compared to other Histadrut enterprises, as well as to other banks. The harsh need of the last few years to cut staff, close branches and take low or no pay rises — which will extend into the future, too — have been achieved far more smoothly at Hapoalim than elsewhere.

The bank, which is now the biggest, and currently the most profitable in the country, is going to need this cohesion, because it faces challenges that are also without parallel elsewhere.

The ownership issue is itself one of these, since the demand to give all shares equal voting rights, either before or after the government redemption of October 1988, would effectively end Hevrat Ha'Ovdim control of Bank Hapoalim.

This is well appreciated, and the campaign against such proposals is just getting underway. It is clear to

all concerned that the Histadrut will not willingly relinquish control of Bank Hapoalim, and the chances are that its struggle will ultimately be successful. But for the next year or two at least, this is a cloud hovering over the bank.

Hapoalim's other major asset is the quality and experience of its senior management team, an advantage grudgingly admitted by its rivals. What has been most noticeable in the aftermath of the arrival of new brooms at both Hapoalim and Leumi is that in the former, none of the existing senior echelon was kicked upstairs or pushed aside or forced to leave, while at Leumi there have been major changes.

This is not because Sivan, now reaching the end of his first year as Hapoalim's CEO, has shrunk from asserting himself. He has instituted the most far-ranging change of direction in any of the banks, involving a completely new business strategy based on decentralizing decision-making and control.

In terms of Hapoalim's history, this has been a 180 degree reversal of the traditional super-centralization that characterized the bank. Staff and managers at all levels have been and are being moved from one area to another, and retraining is extensive as new concepts as well as new methods are introduced.

But the hard core of senior executives, the people who were promoted by the late Ya'acov Levinson on the basis of ability, and who survived all the shocks that Hapoalim has endured in the last five years, are still in place, although it would have been straightforward enough for at least some of them to be replaced.

COMPARE THIS stability to the shakeouts at the top levels of Leumi and Discount, and the size of the advantage becomes clear. On the other hand, however, if Leumi's new CEO, Zadik Bino, is successful in his search for new talent to promote within Leumi, the picture could look different. This is because Leumi's single biggest advantage over Hapoalim today is precisely the fact that, for the first time, it is the underdog, and is therefore under tremendous pressure to succeed. This would be true in any circumstance, but having Bino as the driving force makes it much more so.

Therefore Leumi will probably remain the most "dramatic" bank in terms of a stream of appointments, resignations and reshuffles on the personal level, and of new services and ideas on the business front.

In terms of structure, both Hapoalim and Leumi may be expected to switch the focus of their streamlining and cost-cutting from their domestic mainstream banking operations to two other areas: Abroad, and non-bank subsidiaries and holdings.

Overseas empires, long the most contentious parts of the big banks' operations, are under searching review, and will look very different within a year or two. Not all the changes will be in the direction of shrinkage; new outlets, of some sort, may be expected in the Far East and possibly elsewhere.

Leumi is committed, too, to divesting itself of businesses not in the financial service field, although Hapoalim has made no such promises. Yet it is likely that both of them, and certainly Mizrahi as well, will tend to contract down towards their core businesses, and strip away the rest, even if it is profitable.



The heads of the "Big Two" banks: Hapoalim's Amiram Sivan (left) and Zadik Bino of Leumi.



Hapoalim's Amiram Sivan (left) and Zadik Bino of Leumi. (M. Danic/Media)

WHERE DOES Israel Discount stand in this new environment? The two facts generally agreed about Discount today are that the sudden, and from the bank's point of view unexpected, withdrawal of the Recanat family and Eli Cohen from management positions has shaken the whole management structure, and that — contrary to many predictions — the family is not running the show by remote control.

Discount's new CEO, Gideon Lahav, is reliably reported to be doing his own thing, and to be no one's puppet. The questions still requiring a clear answer are what exactly is Lahav's own thing, and will it succeed in pulling the bank decisively out of its problems.

So far, although pursuing cost-cutting aggressively through staff reductions and no pay rises, and despite having reorganized the way the branches operate, it is difficult to see anything that Discount does especially well, or badly, compared to other banks.

Nevertheless, it has several important pluses on its side. The fact that the new chairman and CEO are not outsiders provides some degree of continuity, which is important since a Recanatless Discount is such a new and therefore strange phenomenon, both for itself and for everyone else.

It has a very solid customer- and deposit-base and traditionally high liquidity, which means that it has the capacity to expand where it counts, namely, in business loans. It also does not have as large an exposure to the disaster areas of the economy as its rivals. And the growth area of small businesses is not unexplored territory for Discount, which has long been active there, as it is to Hapoalim, which is just entering it.

As against all that, Discount suffers from the same imbalance as Leumi, possibly to an even greater extent. This is in the weight of overseas operations relative to domestic operations, and, even more significantly, in the weight of foreign-currency as a percentage of total assets. Since, in general, foreign-currency assets have become much less profitable than shekel assets, both banks have made, and will probably step-up, efforts to redress this imbalance. In addition, at the management level there has been no change beyond the major one stemming from the Recanat family's departure.

But it is generally felt that there are a number of first and second rank executives at Discount who ought to be replaced if the bank is to get moving again. It remains to be seen whether Lahav will want to make, or succeed in making, these changes.

Finally, the threat of a change of ownership is as great to Discount as to Hapoalim, and the Recanatis can make common cause with the Histadrut in opposing the concept of "one share — one vote."

MIZRAHI REMAINS the most troubled of the banking groups in the "arrangement." There are a number of reasons for this. One is the state of flux at both boardroom and manage-

ment level, which continued until January this year and in some cases even longer.

Most recently, Moshe Kraus resigned as head of UMB Trust Company of New York, but this is only one of many personal issues that remain unresolved at Mizrahi. More fundamentally, the bank has yet to figure out what its business identity should be: is it to continue trying to do everything, or is it to specialize, and if so, in what?

Worst of all, Mizrahi is suffering from the fact that it has built-in losses, from various past adventures, including the bank share "regulation" and the overpriced purchase of Tefahot mortgage bank, that will weigh on it for years to come. Thus, if Discount may said to be, in the best case, out of the storm but befuddled by the waves — notwithstanding its switch back to profitability this year — so far.

FINALLY, of course, there is First International. Compared with its bigger rivals, it would seem to be worry-free, but this is an exaggeration. On the other hand, the suggestion that First International has shot its bolt seems premature, and the idea that its run of success must grind to a halt now that Bino has gone seems baseless.

The mere fact that all the other banks are busy crowding into the very area that First International has always made its priority, namely, that of small businesses and upper-income households, suggests that it has been doing things right and can continue to make handsome profits, albeit under greater pressure, given the growing competition.

Furthermore, First International has a strong team at the top, and has finally sorted out its ownership problems, with the purchase of control in Fibi by Jack Nasser's investment group last year. Its problem is to maintain its remarkable record, which is no easy matter. But even if its relative advantage erodes, its absolute position need not worsen.

These differences between the banks in ownership, control, and management will, as noted in the first article of this series, prevent the Bank of Israel — or anyone else — from imposing uniform solutions on the banking system. That is good for the economy, good for the banks, and good for their customers too.

Although the complicated issues surrounding the bank-share "arrangement" and the ultimate ownership of the banks will continue to cloud their long-term future, these need not be tied up with the basic business problems that the banks are finally coming to grips with.

A government that is pursuing deregulation, however hesitantly, and managers concerned with efficiency and profits, are the most hopeful combination of circumstances that Israeli banking has had for many years. Within this context, it is increasingly possible that, overall, more things will be done right than wrong. Which is, after all, what it's all about at the end of the day.

UNION BANK OF ISRAEL בנק איחוד

(Member of Bank Leumi Le-Israel B.M. Group)

CONDENSED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 1987*

(NIS thousands)

	31.3.1987 (Unaudited)	31.12.1986 (Audited)		31.3.1987 (Unaudited)	31.12.1986 (Audited)
ASSETS			LIABILITIES		
Cash on Hand and Deposits with Bank of Israel	655,588	614,465	Deposits from Banks	566,908	616,717
Deposits with Banks	580,815	695,920	Deposits of the Public	1,339,597	1,298,069
Bonds for Investment	17,909	17,148	Deposits for the Granting of Loans	186,465	176,310
Shares for Investment	1,138	1,138	Non-convertible Capital Note	8,033	7,765
Securities for Trading	430	421	Other Liabilities	5,186	11,703
Loans to the Government	169,128	153,720	Total Liabilities	2,106,189	2,110,564
Loans to the Public	734,198	666,755	Shareholders' Equity	85,239	76,587
Bank Premises and Equipment	20,113	20,809		2,191,428	2,187,151
Other Assets	12,108	16,775			
	<u>2,191,428</u>	<u>2,187,151</u>			

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 31 MARCH 1987*

Unaudited (NIS thousands)

	31.3.1987	31.3.1986
Operating Profit before Taxation	18,391	10,635
Provision for Taxation	9,752	7,598
Operating Profit after Taxation	8,639	3,037
The Bank's Equity in Profit (Loss) of Subsidiaries and Affiliates, net	13	(38)
Net Profit for the Period	<u>8,652</u>	<u>2,999</u>

*Adjusted for the effect of inflation based on the March 1987 index.

The quarterly financial statements were prepared in accordance with the same accounting principles applied in the preparation of the audited annual financial statements as at 31.12.1986.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 31 MARCH 1987*

Unaudited (NIS thousands)

	31.3.1987	31.3.1986
Share Capital	62,472	62,472
Surplus	14,115	8,370
Balance at Beginning of Period	62,472	62,472
Net Profit for the Period	8,652	2,999
Balance at end of Period	<u>62,472</u>	<u>62,472</u>

